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MARCH 4, 2002

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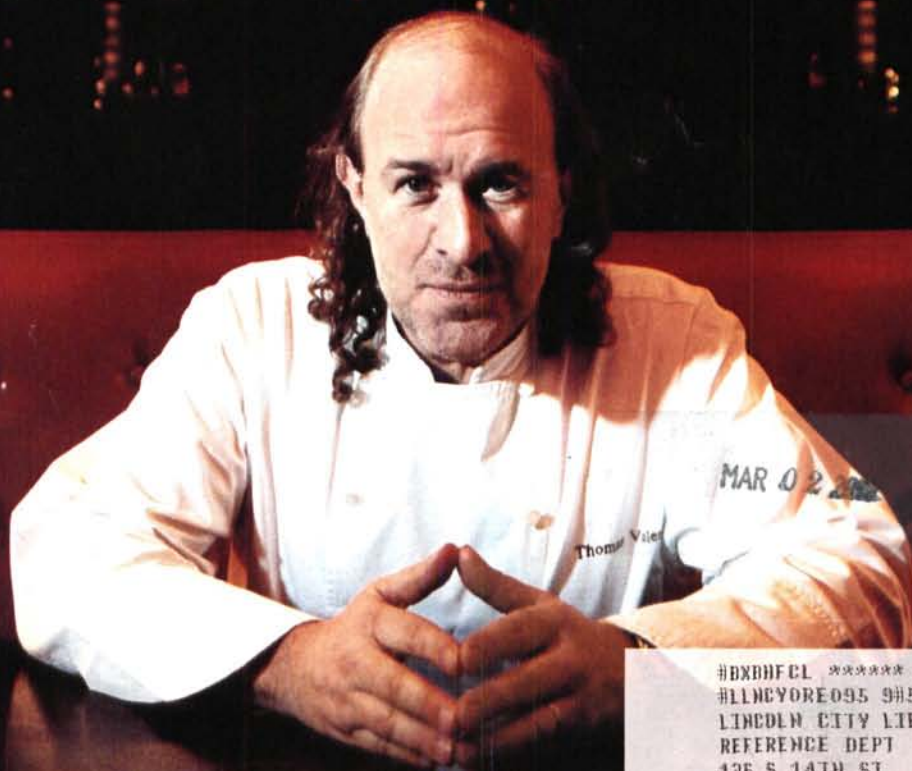
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DANNY PEARL
AND THE
JOURNAL'S
TERRIBLE
YEAR

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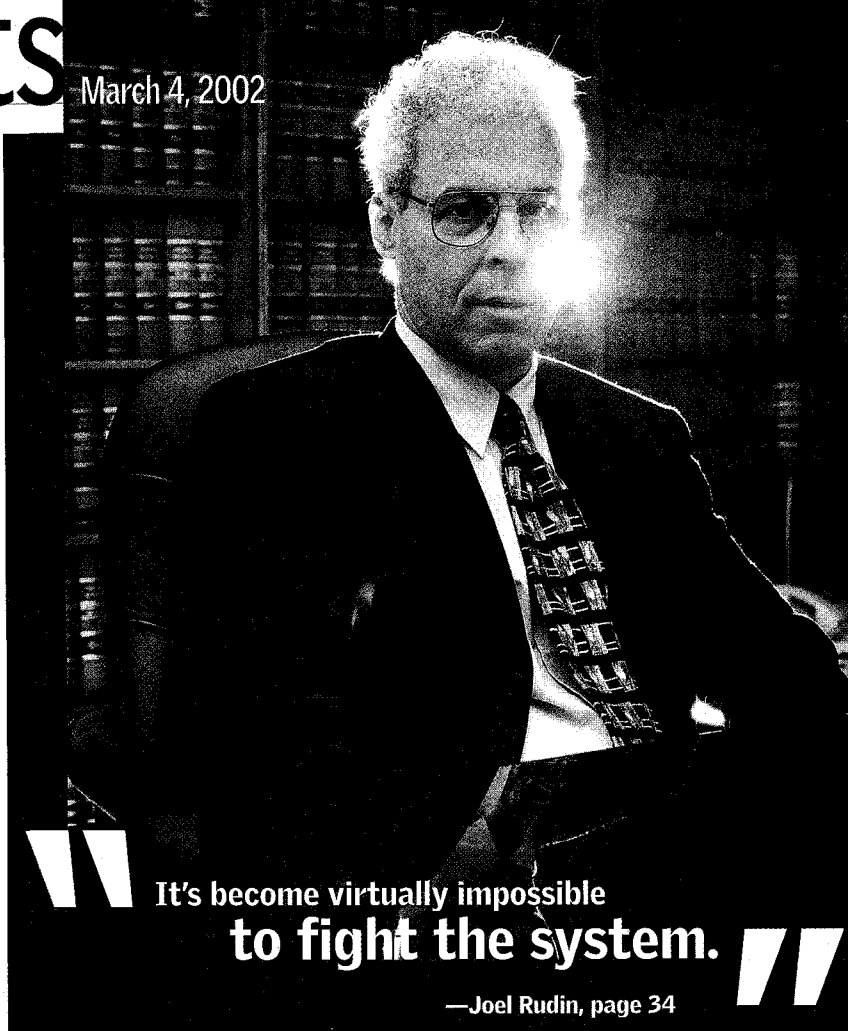
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YOUR PERSONAL BEST

This year, readers can join *New York*'s experts by voting for the top candidates in the "Best of New York" food categories. Cast your ballot at newyorkmetro.com today.



It's become virtually impossible
to fight the system.

—Joel Rudin, page 34

28 Valenti's Day By Marion Maneker

Culinarily, the Upper West Side has long had a reputation as being a cab ride away from civilization. But that was before Tom Valenti, hunting for an apartment, realized that what he really wanted on the West Side was a restaurant. Now, as Valenti's Oquest serves inspired comfort food to the neighborhood's media-and-publishing A-list, he is comforting the families of food-service workers killed on September 11 by co-heading the Windows of Hope Fund. **Plus:** Raisfeld & Patronite on the best of the rest of West Side restaurants.

34 No Defense By Craig Horowitz

Facing mandatory minimums, three-strikes statutes, and a slew of other prosecutorial weapons, today's defense lawyers are feeling increasingly outgunned, and going to trial has become riskier than ever. The public, for the most part, would not be sorry to wave good-bye to the strutting, preening defense lawyer in the three-piece suit. But are we also waving good-bye to due process?

40 Runway Report By Mark Holgate and Amy Larocca

Designers, retailers, and fashion editors on the New York runway shows. **Plus:** A roundup of skirts, pants, dresses, and jackets on the short (if not waiting) list for next fall.

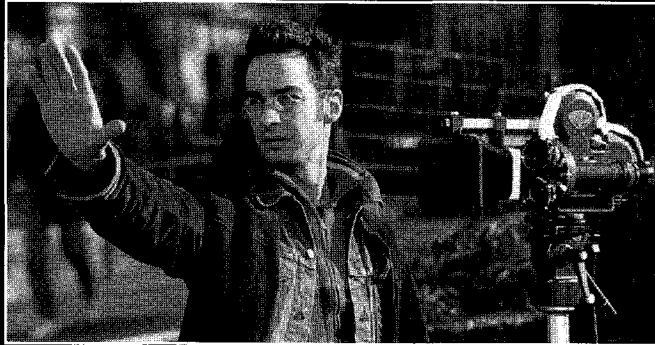
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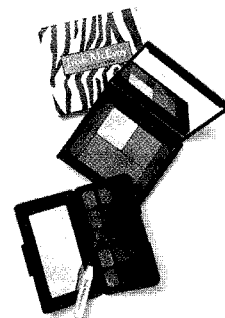
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Letters

Attention, New York men: You are *losers* . . . and I love it! I'm broke and I date beautiful women all the time.

—Brian C. Robinson

Girls Gone Mild?

I was intrigued by one of the findings of the poll of sexual habits conducted for *New York* and MetroTV by Global Strategy Group, Inc. ["Serious Fun," by Ariel Levy, February 11]. The survey reports that professional males in New York had an average of four sexual partners in the past year, while professional women had an average of one.

Because it takes one man and one woman to conduct a heterosexual union, this leads me to conclude that either:

1. Professional men are having most of their sex with nonprofessional women (i.e., female secretaries have more fun);

2. Professional men are overstating the number of partners they had last year; or

3. Professional women are understating the number of partners they had last year.

I suspect that professional women are understating the extent of their sexual activity. While I don't mean to accuse the professional women of New York of being less chaste than those of any other city, an average of one partner sounds too low. Besides, if they're telling the truth, I may need to start dating nonprofessional females; being that one partner that a woman will have all year seems like too much responsibility.

David Kleinbard, JERSEY CITY, N.J.

Chump Change

In regard to your article "Can't Buy Me Love" [By Laurie Sandell, February 11], allow me to suggest to Sascha, the "petite, 25-year-old blonde," that she might consider developing some ambition, digging up some self-respect, and paying for herself. The attitudes demonstrated by Sascha and the other women described in the article are grotesque and insult both men and women alike. There's a name for women who expect men to pay for their company.

Rebecca Baldridge, MANHATTAN

Attention, New York men: You are *losers* . . . and I love it! I'm broke and I'm dating beautiful women all the time. Starbucks, the movies, cheap restaurants . . . on \$20 or less. Most women, even model types, don't care. They want good conversation, listening, vulnerability, and authenticity—foreign words to morons like you. As long as your penis shrinks in proportion to your bank account, my dating calendar will be full.

Brian C. Robinson
MANHATTAN

Image Issues

I am appalled at the cover photo of one of our Bravest cavorting with a model to promote your "Singles" issue [February 11] . . . *after 9/11*! It is patently obvious that the persons who dreamed up this travesty did not get the message of that dreadful day. The image of a firefighter in his bunker gear with a sexy babe debases the meaning of love and cheapens the memory of each life that was lost.

Shira Stein, MANHATTAN

Merry, With Children

Dear Candace Bushnell: You don't know what you are missing ["The Blonde Who's Had More Fun," by Ariel Levy, February 11]. I have had great sex, three children, and an exciting life. But it doesn't stop there. Fifty-two years later, the love and the excitement go on. It's like a bank account that keeps giving interest. Do it before you are overdrawn.

Natalie Levine, BOCA RATON, FLA.

NYC: Leave It and Love

How can you even begin to compare bars in the suburbs to those in New York City ["Sex and the Suburbs," by Susan Dominus, February 11]? If you want a piece of Manhattan, stay in Manhattan. If you want to try something else, go to the 'burbs, where people will actually talk to you even if you aren't a millionaire.

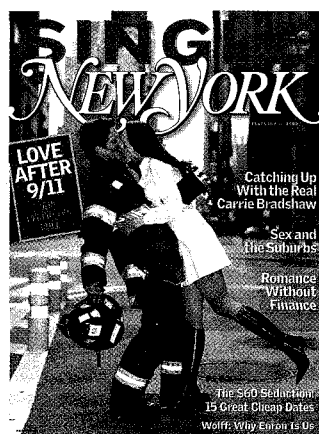
Carleen Buonicore, QUEENS

Take a Number

I think Tucker Carlson missed the target in his article about Bush and his appointments ["The National Interest: Bush League," February 11]. This is not the kind of administration that hands out appointments from back rooms. Having applicants fill out a form on the Internet is a businesslike way of making

sure everyone who is interested gets a file. Positions are filled based on what is needed for the job, not political payback. This is the way the government best serves the people and should be a model for future administrations.

Anne Johnson, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Weight Watcher

John Simon's swipe at Barbara Cook's weight was one of the most spiteful reviews I've ever read ["In Brief: Theater," January 21–28]. What did Cook's size have to do with her performance? It's time to retire this nasty man and find a reviewer who has better things to do than carp about appearances.

H. Scott Jolley, MANHATTAN

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Intelligencer

By Marc S. Malkin

He Knows How to Make a Hit

Alleged mobster **Danny Provenzano's** 44-count racketeering indictment hasn't hurt his moviemaking career. Provenzano, who is one of nine people charged by New Jersey prosecutors with using kidnapping and beatings to extort \$1 million from their victims, has attracted some high-profile talent for *This Thing of Ours*, an independent movie that Provenzano wrote, directed, and produced. *The Sopranos'* **Vincent "Big Pussy" Pastore** stars, and *Godfather* alum **James Caan** has a cameo. Aerosmith guitarist **Joe Perry** scored and performed music, as did **Slash** from Guns N' Roses, and Cheap Trick. **Brad Whitford**, second guitarist of Aerosmith, has a cameo in which he gets hit over the head with a beer bottle. Provenzano still hasn't secured a distributor for the movie but



Britney: Oops, I Was Declined Again

Even **Britney Spears** has credit-card problems. The pop princess-cum-movie star showed up at Barneys recently with her mother, **Lynne**, and tried to buy several Prada handbags. "But when she went to pay, her credit card was declined," one of our spies tells us. She whipped out another card, but that one was declined, too. Luckily, Spears—who raked in \$7 million for her Pepsi deal and ranked sixteenth on *Forbes's* most recent Celebrity 100 list with \$38.5 million in 2000 earnings—was with her bodyguard, who saved the day by reaching for his own plastic and paying for the spending spree. "Britney wasn't embarrassed at all," our source reports.

insists his racketeering trial won't affect his prospects.

"It could help," he says. Provenzano and Pastore will attend the Grammy Awards this week for the second year in a row as a guest of Aerosmith.

Rossellini: Not Ready to Makeup

It's been eight years since **Isabella Rossellini** was dropped as the face of Lancôme, and she's still getting over it. When Lancôme execs ended her contract just six days after her 40th birthday, they claimed that

she wanted more time for her acting career. But Rossellini begs to differ. "I did not leave on my own; they hired a younger woman with raven hair to replace me," she explained in a monologue called "Stronger Than the Creme" during **Eve Ensler's** recent V-Day performance. "They fired me because I was strong." Rossellini says Lancôme's attempts to soothe her didn't help. "They sent me so many flowers on my 40th birthday. It was a



morgue. I knew I was dead. They said, 'Be grateful, Isabella. You're lucky you lasted so long in the business.'"

Close Call Seals Deal

When **Glenn Close's** hair-stylist hit a snag while trying to buy a house recently, the star took matters into her own hands. **Martial Corneville**, who coiffed Close on the sets of *101 Dalmatians* and *Fatal Attraction*, and his real-estate broker, **Willie Suggs**, had been trying to close on a \$635,000 four-story

brownstone in West Harlem's Hamilton Heights neighborhood since November. The loan officer kept postponing the closing date, forcing Corneville to reschedule appointments with his clients. After overhear-

ing yet another heated cell-phone battle while Corneville was coloring her hair, Close got on the phone herself. But she didn't pull a Cruella De Vil, threatening to skin the family puppy—all it took was a little sweet talk. "She was concerned that there might be a communication problem, since he's French, and told them that she would do anything to help move the closing along," a source tells us. The deal closed the next week.

With **Catherine Townsend** and **Aric Chen**.

Miramax Spells It Out for DreamWorks

The feud between Miramax and DreamWorks is heating up. Miramax flacks recently took a not-so-subtle swipe at DreamWorks in a letter to the Los Angeles *Times*. The letter was in response to a column by **Patrick Goldstein** in which he repeated reports that Miramax had been bad-mouthing Universal's *A Beautiful Mind* in order to nab Oscar votes for Miramax's *In the Bedroom*. Goldstein also mocked **Harvey Weinstein's** publicists for issuing a memo to *In the Bedroom* stars instructing them on how to talk to the press. In their letter to the editor, Miramax reps **Amanda Lundberg**, **Janet Hill**, and **Matthew Hiltzik** offered Goldstein ten tips on how to cover the Oscar race. Going down the list, the first letter of each tip spells out DREAMWORKS. Apparently, Miramax execs believe their counterparts at the **David Geffen-Jeffrey Katzenberg-Steven Spielberg**-owned studio have been starting the rumors that Miramax has gone out of its way to derail *A Beautiful Mind*, which was produced in conjunction with DreamWorks. Animosity between the two studios dates back to 1998, when Harvey Weinstein was reported to be lobbying aggressively for *Shakespeare in Love*, which was up against *Saving Private Ryan* for Best Picture. Asked why the letter spelled DreamWorks, Hiltzik said with a laugh, "It does?" A DreamWorks rep declined to comment.

Scene



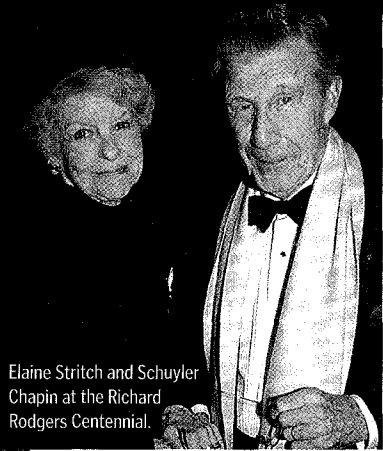
Shiva Rose, Elisa Jimenez, Melissa Auf der Maur, and Yelena Yemchuk at APT for a party in honor of Jimenez's fall collection.



Rufus and Sally Albemarle at Barneys celebrating Billy Norwich's *Molly and the Magic Dress*.



Elaine Stritch and Schuyler Chapin at the Richard Rodgers Centennial.



Philippe Starck and Jean-Paul Gaultier celebrating the opening of Gaultier's Madison Avenue boutique.



Cecily Brown and Daryl Kerrigan at the Gagosian Gallery.



Mark Green and Mario Cuomo at Sotheby's for the Eos Orchestra benefit gala.

Rabbit Run

At the February 19 opening of her new show at the uptown Gagosian Gallery, painter **Cecily Brown** took a moment to explain her latest work. "See, that's

just the most graphic of them all," said the sprightly British painter, in reference to an abstract portrait of two rabbits busy doing what rabbits do best. "But if you can't see the same thing in the others, you've got a very, very clean mind." **John**

McEnroe, disguised in a rumpled Mets cap and five o'clock shadow, arrived early

to avoid the crowds. "I haven't really bought much art since September 11," the host of ABC's eerie new show *The Chair* told a pal before slipping out. "I mean, there was this one Basquiat, but that's it." Fellow painter **Damian Loeb** strolled through, doing his best to avoid photographers. "I'm sorry," he said. "I just always get a little tight-assed at openings. You know, having to talk

to so many people I don't really want to see. But Cecily is a good friend, and a great painter, so it's cool to see her doing well." She did, in fact, seem quite well: At that very moment, **Anna Wintour** (sans sunglasses, despite the glaring fluorescents) was delivering a battery of air kisses. **DAVID AMSDEN**



Joan Rivers, Wallace Shawn, and Blaine Trump at Town Hall for the God's Love We Deliver benefit.



Photographs by
Patrick McMullan

GOTHAM

Life in the New City

A Death in the Family

On September 11, the *Wall Street Journal* lost its newsroom. This is infinitely worse. By Seth Mnookin

In the month since Daniel Pearl was kidnapped, hope built and crashed in crushing waves at the *Wall Street Journal*. The week before his colleagues learned of his death, when optimism was at its peak, a television truck was camped outside the *Journal*'s office—in anticipation, many at the paper believed, of his imminent release. Some executives at the paper even allowed themselves to speculate about the inevitable sweepstakes that would ensue when news outlets from around the world jockeyed for Pearl's first post-release interview.

And then, cruelly, it was over. Last Thursday, at about 4:25 P.M., an e-mail from managing editor Paul Steiger and publisher Peter Kann went out to the paper's employees, writers, editors, and executives—who've been housed in an archipelago of temporary quarters stretching from South Brunswick, New Jersey, to midtown Manhattan since September—announcing Pearl's death and denouncing his murder as "an act of barbarism."

At Canal Street, where many *Journal* reporters are

bivouacked, the shades were lowered—the third-floor offices have large bay windows visible from Sixth Avenue—and about 50 people gathered in the "Money and Investing" area to watch the first reports on television. Deputy managing editor Daniel Hertzberg led a moment of silence. Many reporters cried. By five o'clock, the newsroom was back to work, with reporters putting out calls and editors moving copy. That evening, another e-mail went around: "Anyone who wants to avoid the camera crews in front of the building can use the garage exit."

The reporters of the *Journal*, even more than those of other major papers, are trained to stay in the background. It's a trait that's exemplified by the plainspoken Steiger, and his obvious discomfort at being in the limelight has bonded him closely with his employees. On Thursday night, he was to have received the National Press Foundation's Editor of the Year award in Washington, in large part to honor his leadership in putting out a paper on September 12. On September 11, *Journal* staffers briefly feared Steiger

might have been buried by the rubble; instead, he was massing reporters on the banks of the Hudson, strategizing how best to proceed.

Danny Pearl's death is only the latest of the *Journal*'s travails. "This paper's been to hell and back," said one reporter. In January 2001, aerospace writer Jeff Cole died in a plane crash. "There was an unbelievably emotional ceremony in the Marriott hotel last year," said the reporter. Over the summer, there were layoffs. And in the fall, deputy national editor Rich Regis—who had been Cole's editor—was hospitalized with vasculitis, a potentially fatal respiratory illness doctors think may have been caused by dust and chemicals from the World Trade Center disaster. Already people are worrying about whether their old offices will be safe when the paper is scheduled to return sometime this summer. Reporter Carlos Tejada is spearheading a campaign to make sure no one is moved back to the World Financial Center before it's safe. "People are concerned," he



said on Thursday. "It's not like we're tourists taking pictures and going home," he said. "The fear is that we'll be moved in while there are still poisons in the air."

"Psychologically, we've been hammered," another *Journal* reporter said from the Canal Street office on Friday morning. (The staff had been uncharacteristically asked to refer all calls about Pearl to a company spokesman.)

"There's kind of a what-the-fuck-else-can-happen attitude," the reporter continued. "We thought things were getting better," said another.

Now Danny Pearl, with his wit and many skills, and his boyish openness, and his humanitarianism, is helping the *Journal* define itself. "If someone had to be the public face of what we're like," one reporter said, "it did us proud that it was Danny. He made us all look good."

all new season:

monica in **black and white**

gladiator days: anatomy of a **prison** murder

the **execution** of wanda jean

taxicab **confessions** 2002: a fare to remember

murder on a sunday morning

autopsy 8: **dead** giveaway

southern **comfort**

hookers at the point: five years later

small town **ecstasy**

blue **vinyl**

lalee's kin: the **legacy** of cotton

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Lit Happens

A year after Chicago's librarians and booksellers chose *To Kill a Mockingbird* as the book to bring the city together, a similar group of literary busybodies has taken up the cause in New York. But the front-runner, Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker*, seems unlikely to unite the committee (one faction is vying for James McBride's *The Color of Water*), let alone a city of 8 million. We asked New York's literati, "What book should we all read at the same time?"



Jonathan Franzen: "*The House of Mirth*, by Edith Wharton, a killer novel capable of getting the city's population weeping as one."

Tom Wolfe: "*Sister Carrie*, by Theodore Dreiser, the first great American novel of the city."

Norman Mailer: "*U.S.A.*, by John Dos Passos."



Susan Sontag: "*Sleepless Nights*, by Elizabeth Hardwick, a book of dreams and memories, both true and false, about coming to New York from Kentucky, choosing New York, sticking with New York."

Chip McGrath: "Chang-rae Lee is a very good friend of mine, so if you want a better book than *Native Speaker*, I'd say *A Gesture Life*, his other book."

Jimmy Breslin: "*The Color of Water* is a piece of shit. Librarians are the nicest people we have, but why don't they leave us alone?"



Fran Lebowitz: "The only book that would turn New York into a giant book club is a check-book!"

JADA YUAN

The Great Pretender?

His methods were, to say the least, unorthodox, and far from *Timesian*: spending hours with sources without a notebook, writing epic-length articles with barely a quotation in them. But Michael Finkel knew how to tell a story, and he told some great ones for *The New York Times Magazine*—until last week, in an unprecedented editors' note, the paper revealed that the title character of his November 18 story, "Is Youssef Malé a Slave?," was actually a composite of several young men. Finkel, 33, was fired, leaving some to wonder if the *Times* had been too taken with his (too-hard-to-check) articles from such far-flung locales as the Ivory Coast, Gaza, and Haiti, where he famously had to be rescued from a refugee boat.

Reached at home in Montana, Finkel is shaky and glum ("My career is on the line," he says) and, yes, defiant, casting himself less as a Stephen Glass

master of invention than as an overreaching artist who dared to touch the sun and got singed. "It's an isolated incident, without question a wrong decision," he says. "I hope readers know that this was an attempt to reach higher—to make something beautiful, frankly. In the article, there's no question of the quality of reporting, just in the journalistic techniques employed."

How can the quality and the accuracy be unrelated? "In my writing," Finkel explains, "I try to combine all my favorite elements of journalism—accuracy, real characters that exist on this planet—with all my favorite elements of literature: a sense of flow, of propulsion, of wanting to read every sentence." This time, though, *literary* seemed to trump *journalism*. "Look, I wrote a 6,000-word story without a single quote, without a blink



Is Youssef Malé A Slave?

The ambitious journey of 15 weeks from Haiti to the Ivory Coast. By Michael Finkel

in the shift of tone and pace. It was an ambitious attempt. I slipped. It deserved a correction. But there is a great deal of accuracy. Not once has the prose been called into question."

He's prepared to fall on his sword—"The magazine had to do what they had to do. I would have done it to myself"—but he's not about to forget what he did for them. "I put my life on the line for the *Times*—off of Haiti, in the line of fire in Gaza, in Afghanistan." His own story, he says, is just beginning. "Not to get too maudlin, but I think all mistakes are tests for one's mettle."

"I am a writer. It's like a third arm to me. My first reaction to all of this was to write about it. I've filled up pages in my journal about it. I'm going to write about you."

ROBERT KOLKER

Pierre Cardin's *Jeux d'Enfants*

Pierre Cardin, mod designer and godfather of licensing—he was the first to stick his logo on everything from frying pans to silk cigarettes—has a new role: party planner. First he bought the Marquis de Sade's chateau in Provence and started throwing fêtes there. And now, at the age of 80, he thinks Maxim's—the dusty-chic French restaurant he's owned since the eighties—should feel young again. He's been having weekly parties at Maxim's in Paris "for young people," and last Thursday he held one at Maxim's on Madison Avenue. (He has also begun, naturally, to license Maxim's food products.) We caught up with Cardin by phone in Beverly Hills, where he was visiting with Nancy Reagan.

Tell us about your Maxim's party.

We try to change a little bit Maxim's. When I was young, to go to Maxim's was something special. It was very exciting to go where there were all these rich people.

Why is it just for young people?

In my youth, you would not see the girls without their parents. But now they can go in the night when they are 14 or 16. And they dance.

Do you dance?

I'm just looking. I can dance, of course, but I don't want to.

No older people at all then?

Some. But it's better if it's young people. They dance.

What about Nancy Reagan?

Well, yes, of course! She'd like it. She'd understand.

AMY LAROCCA





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Meet an international supermodel.



The Front Row

At the fall 2002 collections, not every piece of fashion news was on the runways: Even if this year's shows were more intimate—and low-key—than before, high-wattage guests still pulled out all the stops with fur, feathers, and a flurry of labels.

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

STARS

"All black with a rock-and-roll touch—amazing!"

—Penélope Cruz at Ralph Lauren



INDUSTRY





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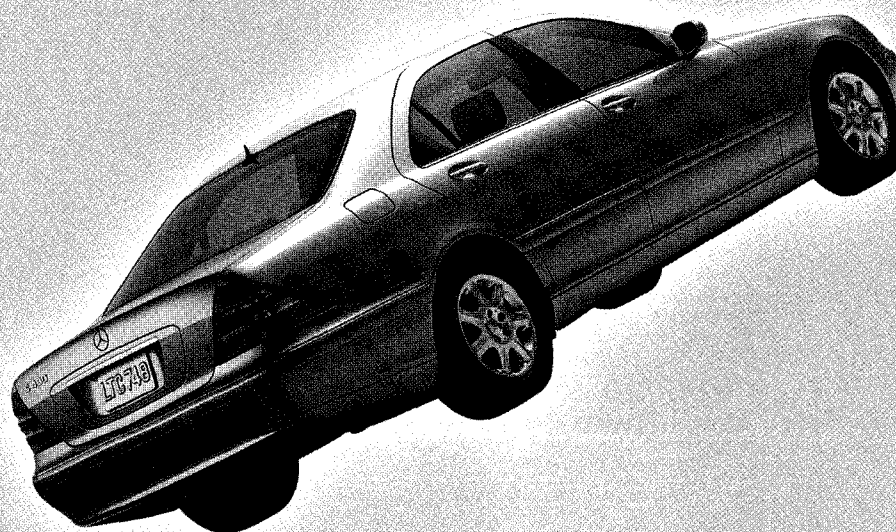


Everyone looks thinner in black.

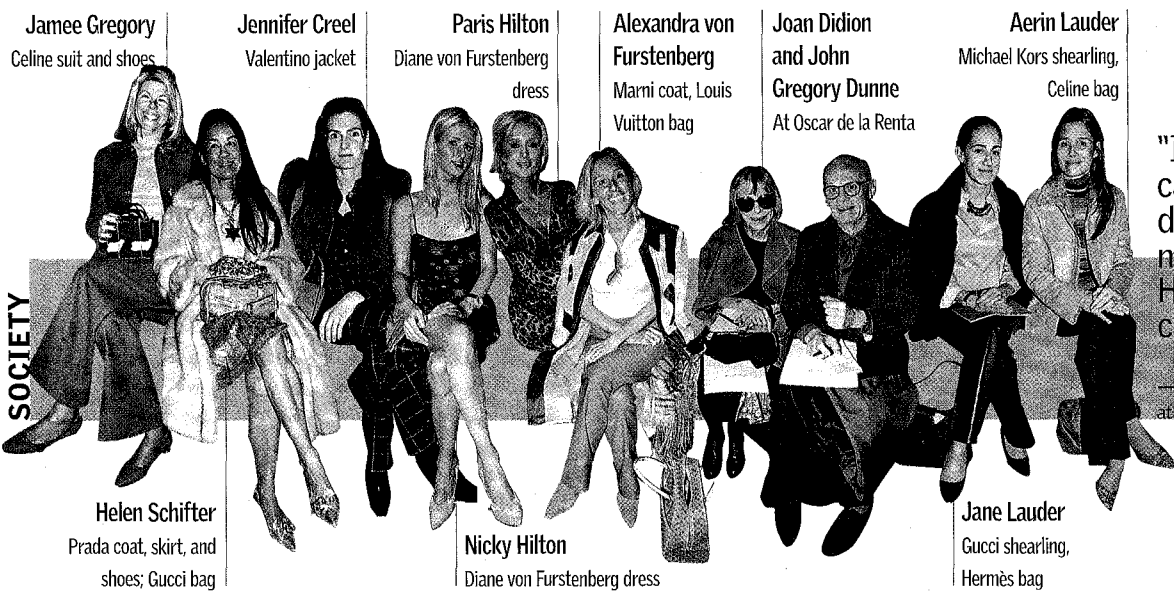




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Slip into something more comfortable.



Jamee Gregory
Celine suit and shoes

Jennifer Creel
Valentino jacket

Paris Hilton
Diane von Furstenberg dress

Alexandra von Furstenberg
Marni coat, Louis Vuitton bag

Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne
At Oscar de la Renta

Aerin Lauder
Michael Kors shearling, Celine bag

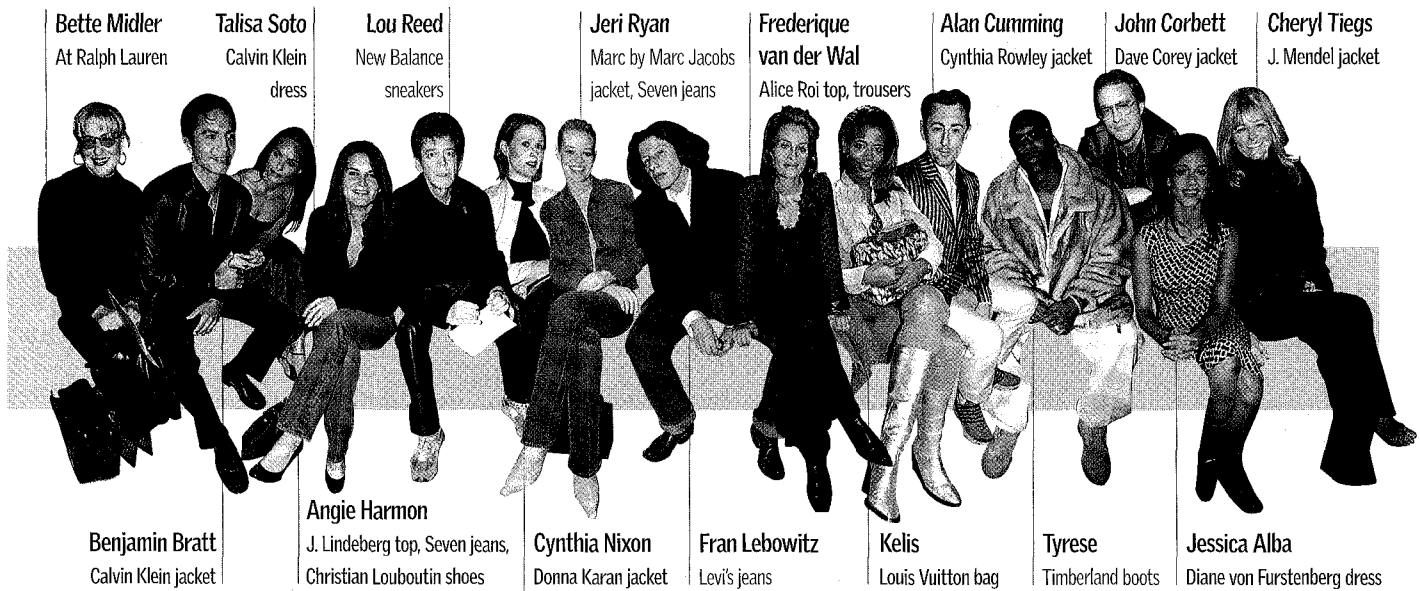
Helen Schifter
Prada coat, skirt, and shoes; Gucci bag

Nicky Hilton
Diane von Furstenberg dress

Jane Lauder
Gucci shearling, Hermès bag

"I love the gray cashmere dress with the mink trim... Half fancy, half couch potato."

—Helen Schifter at Oscar de la Renta



Bette Midler
At Ralph Lauren

Talisa Soto
Calvin Klein dress

Lou Reed
New Balance sneakers

Jeri Ryan
Marc by Marc Jacobs jacket, Seven jeans

Frederique van der Wal
Alice Roi top, trousers

Alan Cumming
Cynthia Rowley jacket

John Corbett
Dave Corey jacket

Cheryl Tiegs
J. Mendel jacket

Benjamin Bratt
Calvin Klein jacket

Angie Harmon
J. Lindeberg top, Seven jeans, Christian Louboutin shoes

Cynthia Nixon
Donna Karan jacket

Fran Lebowitz
Levi's jeans

Kelis
Louis Vuitton bag

Tyrese
Timberland boots

Jessica Alba
Diane von Furstenberg dress



Lucy Sykes,
Marie Claire, Hogan bag, Tse sweater

Plum Sykes, *Vogue*, Philip Treacy hat, Gucci pants

Kate Betts,
writer, Veronique Branquinho coat

Cathy Horyn,
New York Times, Hedi Slimane suit

Kate White,
Cosmopolitan, Betsey Johnson coat

Patrick McCarthy,
W, Armani suit, Gucci shoes

Bernard Arnault,
LVMH, Hedi Slimane suit

Carine Roitfeld,
French Vogue, Yves Saint Laurent sandals

Isabella Blow,
stylist, Philip Treacy hat, Manolo Blahnik shoes

Libby Callaway, *New York Post*, Betsey Johnson dress, Hollywood boots

Sarah Hailes,
Kima Zabete, Liz Collins scarf

Beth Buccini,
Kima Zabete, Clements Ribeiro coat

Bridget Foley,
W, Marc Jacobs bag

Kim France, *Lucky*, Kathy Kemp pants, Foley and Corinna top

"That leather dress! He does one-piece dressing better than anyone."

—Robert Verdi at Michael Kors

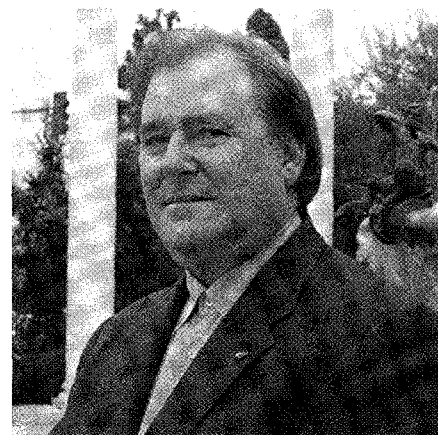
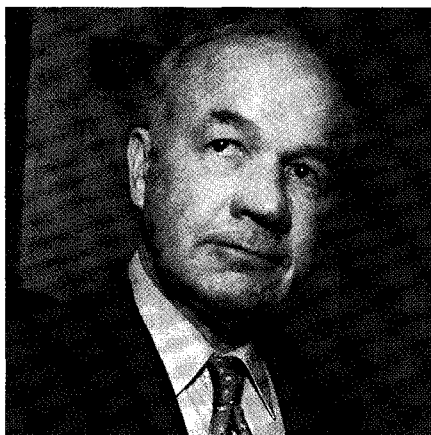
Spread Thin

Enron's Kenneth Lay and Global Crossing's Gary Winnick weren't just spreadsheet jockeys, they were the last great heroes of the self-delusional business culture.

THE BUSINESS CULTURE, WHICH MAY NOW BE ending, started twenty years ago as the Reagan era took hold and the bull market got under way. Before that, before corporate man became a sexy thing, corporate America was a white-bread, repressed, deeply uncool place to be. A host of structural changes nurtured this new culture—deregulation, an end to inflation, massive deficit spending, and the bulge of baby-boomers in their prime earning years among them.

My own favorite theory, however, for what caused business to become such a compelling sport and transforming experience was the advent of the spreadsheet (in '82 or '83, shortly after the introduction and widespread adoption of the IBM PC). First VisiCalc, then Lotus 1-2-3, and then, of course, Excel. If you could work a spreadsheet, money suddenly became a highly fluid concept—the buck never stopped anywhere (oddly, during the eighties, *bottom line* became a metaphor for something absolute and irreducible when, in fact, the bottom line was becoming ever more elusive). Financial strategy became like a war game. If you played it one way, you risked the end of the world, but if you changed a variable, you were safe and secure. Business reality became wonderfully plastic (running numbers has about the same relationship to actual business as sex fantasies do to sex—indeed, running numbers gets to be a sort of fetish).

Financial engineering (the term of art for the business that grew up around working a spreadsheet) becomes as complex as any activity becomes when you increase the variables exponentially. "Can he keep track of the moving pieces?" was what got asked about prospective managers of high-flying companies. The question was not, "Can he work hard and focus on the many details of the business?" Rather it was, "Can he appreciate that business has become a Rube Goldberg system of effects and counter-effects, of balancing one representation against its



KENNY BOY AND GLUM GARY: The clueless Enron and Global Crossing chiefs, misled by . . . whom?

counter-representation (what the Street is told versus what the media is told versus what the employees are told), of keeping not two sets of books but as many sets as can be imagined (the spreadsheet accommodates all fantasies)?"

In short order, business became way too complex for mere businessmen—the pallid, gray dad types of the past. Business suddenly demanded a different caliber of brain power and temperament.

I remember being glum and depressed, at first, about the new ethos of the early eighties. All of a sudden, one's subversive college friends were becoming investment bankers (it took me two years to figure out what an I-banker was—that it was in some mysterious way different from just being a stockbroker). But then I caught the spirit, too. There was a revolutionary quality to what was going on—the old order was being swept away (almost everybody from the prior business generation was exiled). There was nothing, I found, so thrilling as a business meeting; you met all kinds of overblown, exaggerated, unstable types; it was what the literary world was supposed to be like but wasn't. Takeoverism became all the rage (I was a writer, but I found there was nothing stopping me from offering

to take over companies—and briefly, I became a bully with a spreadsheet).

Every day it was happening: Absolute nobodies, with only heart and imagination—and strange new ideas about how to analyze and manipulate numbers—took over heretofore unassailable, invulnerable, and oppressively dreary great American corporations. It was a class overthrow: outsiders against insiders, smarties against dopes, risk takers against old farts.

Business, which used to be a specialized, opaque, conservative activity—something like the military—became the national pastime. If you weren't taking over companies, you were getting into the stock market, watching the miracle of those mutuals and 401(k)'s going up and up. If you weren't an entrepreneur working spreadsheets to start your own dreamy enterprise, you were an option holder in someone else's dream.

Everybody was in business. Everything became business—technology, entertainment, news, even academia. And if it was already business, it could always be made more businessy—Enron was a Texas oil company that transformed itself into a global financial enterprise. Financing something, or refinancing something—the

moment when reality always suffered its greatest adjustments—become the nation's central economic activity.

The culture itself may have been dumbed down, but business culture was smart, competitive, obsessive, relentless in its pursuit of the next best idea. Business became the ultimate abstraction. A new, near-philosophical language was invented to deal with the many-hued nature of reality and nonreality that the world of business was defining (it was as utopian as the language of revolution). Business became the focus of how people related to one another, of how communities were created, of how human progress was made. Business, as a system of logic that would allow you to accomplish any goal, at potential great benefit to everyone (and with a little extra to the person

ed to assume that in fact this *was* business—a little lying or a lot of lying. *Caveat emptor.*

But in this new age, a dramatic structural change—i.e., *everybody* became part of the business culture—allowed for the second stage of reality distortion. This might be called the mass hypnosis, or the propaganda stage—the big lie.

The initial lie, those early spreadsheet fantasies and eureka moments (they were not all lies, actually—adding layers and layers of complexity to financial structures often was actually profitable), provided the capital to increase the level of reality control (“mindshare” this is sometimes called). This reality control involved subsidizing politicians and sports arenas (not just Enron Field in Houston but 3Com Park in San Francisco, Staples Center in Los Angeles,

“With spreadsheet software, running numbers has about the same relationship to actual business as fantasies do to sex.”

running the spreadsheet), was the metaphor of the age. The rich would get richer, and so would everybody else.

THE QUESTION NOW, THE EMBARRASSING question (to say the least), is to what extent the business culture—*our* culture—was just a twenty-year Ponzi scheme.

The literary agent John Brockman, famous for hosting a “billionaires” dinner at the annual TED conference for technology, media, and finance bigwigs (the latest iteration of this dinner, minus the billionaires, was held last week in Monterey), said to me recently: “Everything business people say is a lie.”

He was at that moment reflecting on Enron and the collapse of Gary Winnick's Global Crossing. But he had a larger point: The business culture itself—not unlike, say, the Cold War culture—had created a false world. He didn't only mean it was crooked; he meant the business culture had fostered a new, parallel reality.

In some sense, of course, businesses were doing, in this new era, what businesses always have done, just with the benefit of more sophisticated mathematical (as well as propaganda) tools: trying to con anyone willing to be conned. Businesses now, as always, depended on borderline half-truths (*We are an absolutely healthy company; you can count on our stock going up*), insisted on dubious assumptions (*Consolidation is necessary*), and employed “aggressive” accounting practices (*What debt?*). Except in the past, before the advent of the business culture, we tend-

ed to assume that in fact this *was* business—a little lying or a lot of lying. *Caveat emptor.*

Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego). It meant opportunistically moving money through financial institutions that would then tout your genius rather than have analysts question it. And, of course, it meant issuing hundreds of thousands (no, it must be millions by now) of press releases (it would be vastly unfair if, at the end of all this, some P.R. people didn't go to jail).

BUT MOST OF ALL, THE BUSINESS CULTURE benefited and thrived because there was no *counter*-business culture. The business culture bought not just presidents and dirty politicians (Democrats and Republicans alike—they all needed the dough) but *everybody*.

The only people who remained outside the business culture, it sometimes seemed, were people who had something wrong with them. They were emotionally troubled, or socially maladjusted, or marginal in some more or less unattractive way, or quaintly anachronistic. (The recent rise of the anti-business vegan-Euro-Pacific-Northwest protesters has been instructive because they are so obviously all retards.)

Likewise, academia, in theory a noncommercial cultural force, became a place for economic and cultural castoffs—the top talent is always rushing off to the private sector.

And then there's the media. Certainly the media has romanticized the business culture and retailed all those bogus press releases, as well as done what the media always does in the presence of a new Zeitgeist—embrace it (continued on page 94)



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Inside Agitators

The Working Families Party is making serious inroads into the Liberal Party base, which could have an impact on the Democrats' chances in the upcoming gubernatorial election.

IN 1991, DAN CANTOR CALLED ME UP AND made the following immodest claim. "We're starting a new political party," he said. "One day, it's gonna change New York politics. I want to tell you about it."

Then, it was a rump confederation of various liberal-leftish activists calling itself the New Party, a name I always liked for its future potential as a quaintly interesting anachronism (after all, we live in 340-year-old "New" York, right?). But by 1997, the New Party had fizzled. Cantor hooked up with some other activists to try again. This time, they put their heads together, and I suppose did some polling, and decided they needed a name that delivered some idea of what they stood for (e.g., living wage, minimum wage, health care for poor people, federal dollars out of Washington). They amassed some institutional—that is, union—backing. They became the Working Families Party.

Eleven years later, Cantor's prophecy might come true. One of the WFP's long-held goals has been to become the small-*l* liberal alternative to the big-*L* Liberal Party—the domain, lo these many years, of the sui generis Ray Harding, New York's last political boss. The gubernatorial election will take place on November 5. And it's possible that when the cockerel crows on November 6, one of these parties will find its power enhanced, and the other will cease to exist.

I'll explain.

First, the law, and some background. A group becomes an official political party in this state, with its own ballot line, when its candidate for governor receives 50,000 votes, a feat the group must repeat every four years to continue being an official party. The Liberal Party first accomplished this in 1946. The WFP first did so in the last gubernatorial election, 1998, when it endorsed Democratic nominee Peter Vallone, spent seven weeks rustling up votes everywhere it could, and—after several fit-

ful days of waiting for the absentee votes and the paper ballots to come in—delivered Vallone exactly 51,325 votes. The WFP finished eighth out of eight, earning the last row on the ballot, Row H.

Since then, things have improved. Both the WFP and the LP gave Hillary Clinton their lines in 2000—minor parties typical-



PARTY ANIMAL: Dan Cantor in the Working Families Party office in Brooklyn.

ly cross-endorse the major-party candidates, though they sometimes run their own people—and while she drew 80,000 votes on the Liberal line, the WFP delivered her more than 100,000. Last March, in a special election for the Suffolk County Legislature, the WFP backed the Democrat and produced a result that is the minor-party cadre's fantasy: The 210 votes William Lindsay got on the WFP line provided his margin of victory. For a small party, that means leverage, which the WFP converted into the passage of living-wage legislation in Suffolk.

This last point—an electoral result leading to a policy result—is what makes the WFP unique. Most minor-party leaders want two things: patronage for a few of their people and a commitment from the candidate they back to hold the line on a few litmus-test issues. "American politics is totally candidate-centered," Cantor says. "We want to be values-centered. We're more ideological."

This notion that a party should be more about its ideas than its stars is a European thing, really; the WFP is, literally, the labor party (its main backers are the communication and auto-workers unions, and health-care workers, along with ACORN, the housing-and-poverty-advocacy group).

Strangely enough, pols and voters are listening. "They're having impact," says Brooklyn councilman Bill DeBlasio. "When they call a meeting now, people go." Adds West Side councilwoman Gale Brewer: "They're organized, they have good briefing papers, and the meeting starts on time." On the left, these conditions could not always be taken for granted.

Of course, when things gain power, they also gain critics. Some of the state's major labor leaders regard the WFP as an upstart nuisance, even if they won't say so on the record. Last month, the WFP angered one of its most committed members, Staten Island transit-union leader Larry Hanley, by backing a conservative Democrat in a special State Assembly election. In the process, the party overturned the endorsement recommendation of a local committee that Hanley headed. Hanley feels betrayed. "I had all these friends for four years," he says, "and lo and behold, they turn around and give me a royal screwing."

Cantor counters that the candidate the party ultimately backed, Jimmy Hart, was the only one with a chance of winning, and "if he had won, and we'd been the margin, it would have been very valuable for the party as a whole." Such intramurals may simply be growing pains, or they may be symptomatic of a deeper problem—that as the party rises in influence, it will become so hungry for big labor's money and approval that it will lose the very independence that has been its most appealing trait.

BACK TO THE GOVERNOR'S RACE. THE LIBERAL Party will probably endorse Andrew Cuomo. Carl McCall is clearly making a heavy play for the WFP. However, local tea-leaf readers note that the communication workers, a major WFP constituent, just endorsed Cuomo, so the WFP's intentions aren't easy to divine.

If both parties back the same Democrat, will there be enough faithful voters around the state for that candidate to get 50,000 votes on both lines? Hillary did, but there was a consensus behind her candidacy among liberal activists, which might not be the case for this year's Democratic gubernatorial nominee if the primary is fractious (besides, 2000 was a presidential-election year, and more peo-

ple voted). If they back *different* Democrats, then the party whose candidate loses the primary will be forced to persuade people to vote for its nominee anyway, even though such votes will diminish the Democratic nominee's chance of beating George Pataki.

"The Liberal Party will probably endorse Andrew Cuomo. Carl McCall is clearly making a heavy play for the WFP."

How do you choose? When do you choose? Do you go out on a limb for one or the other early? If you do, and he wins, he'll owe you more (but if you do and he loses . . .). Or do you go with a placeholder candidate at first, then dump him or her after the primary and hand your line over to the Democratic nominee? That's the safer strategy, but then the candidate knows you weren't really with him, and he doesn't come to your rallies and fund-raisers. It's one of the great games of chicken, really, in all of American politics.

Ray Harding has always had to make these calculations, and he does so with exceeding cleverness. But until now, he's never had to make them with another party

breathing down his neck. Now, small-*l* liberal voters who prefer voting on a minor-party line have an alternative to the Libs.

Harding will not be easily outfoxed (there is a school of thought afoot that he could end up with Pataki). He is well aware of the WFP volleys aimed at his capacious

person, but he refuses to return serve. "Let them find a niche, and good luck to them," he says. "I shrug my shoulders when I read these pejorative statements."

DAN CANTOR WILL NEVER BE RAY HARDING. He's not Falstaffian; he's not a sardonic quipster. When I ask him to tell me interesting things about himself, the best he can offer is that he loves the Band. It's mathematically impossible for any human being to love the Band more than I do, but that's not exactly a fascinating personal tidbit.

He can't be as interesting as Ray. But by November, he could be more powerful. ■

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Rebel, Rebel

Republican campaign-finance agitator Christopher Shays has a reputation in Washington as a genuine Mr. Smith—a testament to his skill as an actor, if not to his honesty.

CHRIS SHAYS IS A WILY GUY. HE DOESN'T LOOK it. Mild-mannered and polite, a Christian Scientist who doesn't drink coffee or raise his voice, the 56-year-old Connecticut Republican is the first person you'd ask to hold your wallet. He has that look: clean, like he takes a dozen showers a day and rolls in talcum powder after every one. Chris Shays doesn't give off shifty vibes.

Never judge a congressman by his cover. On the night of the campaign-finance-reform vote in the House a couple of weeks ago, I interviewed Shays on television. My first question was the obvious one: If soft money is so terrible—and your bill is based on the premise that it is—then why not ban it immediately? Why does your legislation allow soft money in this November's midterm elections?

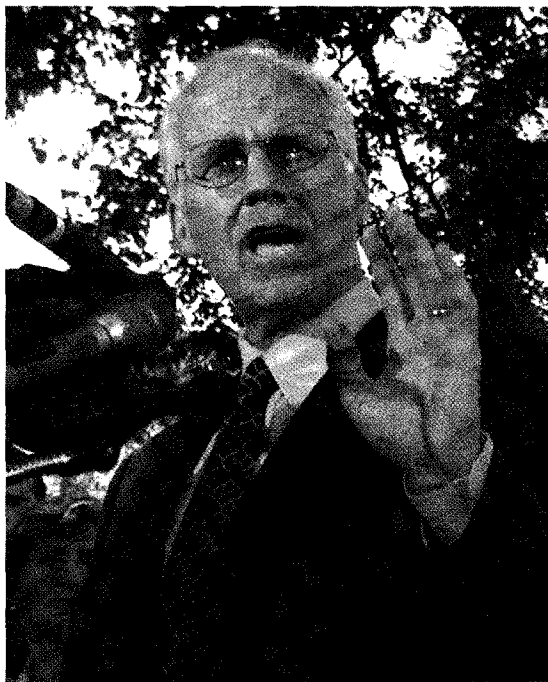
It's a hard question to answer, and not surprisingly, Shays didn't even try to answer it. The remarkable part was how he evaded it. "You know, we have feedback," he said. "I can hardly hear you." And with that, he removed his earpiece, leaving me, in a studio across town, unable to ask him another question, or force him to answer the first one. Freed from the bothersome give and take of an interview, he began his speech: "I can't hear you, but the bottom line is, we are looking to ban corporate-treasury money and union-dues money, enforcing the 1907 law, the 1947 law, and then enforce the 1974 law that says 'no large contributions.' And that's what we're attempting to do."

The other guest, a fellow congressman who was sitting next to Shays, looked confused. His earpiece wasn't giving him trouble. He could hear everything clearly. And so, it turns out, could Shays. I checked later: His audio connection was fine. If there was "feedback," it wasn't caused by technical problems.

Pretty crafty. And doubly so, given Shays's reputation. You'd never suspect him of doing something like that. He's the shoplifting nun.

The next morning, the *Washington Post* was none the wiser. A fawning "Style" profile described Shays as a man with "the avuncular bearing of a beloved high school teacher—a mentor who, in retrospect, might seem a little naive." Far from a calculating political operative, Shays, readers learned, is

ness and political courage, "he read aloud from the Gettysburg Address in the dawn solitude." In case you missed the point, the headline summed it up: CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, THE GOP'S RELUCTANT REBEL; IRE OVER HIS SOFT-MONEY BILL IS ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM CRY.



SHAYS'S REBELLION: Representative Christopher Shays holding a news conference on campaign-finance reform last July.

"slightly goofy, a man prone to giving surprise noogies on the House floor, hugging his fellow members, mussing their hair and breaking spasmodically into pitched giggles."

Shays did his best to remain in character. He told the *Post* that on momentous mornings he jogs to one of Washington's many memorials, meditating on the life of the statesman remembered there. The week of the vote on campaign-finance reform, Shays stopped at the Lincoln Memorial. There, at the nation's temple to fair-

Pretty amusing—and completely, totally wrong. In fact, there has never been anything reluctant about Shays's rebellions. In 1998, he was one of five House Republicans to vote against every article of Clinton's impeachment. By itself, this is not an especially telling fact. Shays is from a swing district that generally supported Clinton. It was his flamboyant media-mongering that set Shays apart from less savvy moderates.

Early in the Lewinsky scandal, Shays announced that he planned to vote against impeachment. Then, days before the vote, he announced he was reconsidering. There's nothing more newsworthy than a vote in play, and Shays leveraged his. He invited reporters to accompany him as he staged one-on-one encounter groups with his constituents to talk about impeachment. ("What's been on your mind?" Shays gently asks. "You want to tell me how you feel.") He moderated a televised town-hall meeting in his district. More than 1,000 people came; Paul Newman couldn't get in. The following day, he requested, and got, a meeting with Clinton at the White House.

Shays quickly became famous, though he was careful never to seem pleased about it. He continued to play the role of the sensitive, world-averse artiste trapped in the

body of a Connecticut congressman. He cried in public and boasted about it later. Conservatives were infuriated. Right-wing columnist Ann Coulter (who for a time talked about challenging him in the primary) called Shays a sissy.

It was a classic case of taking Chris Shays too seriously. It's not easy being a professional reformer in Washington, a city that isn't very corrupt and therefore not in desperate need of reform. To do it, you need a shtick. Shays has picked the Tormented Conscience of a Nation routine. It's the least appealing of all options.

And there are options, like the one taken by Marty Meehan, the Democratic cosponsor of Shays's bill. Meehan has all the florid charm of the straightforward stereotype he is, the Irish Catholic sports fan-beer drinker from Mill Town, Massachusetts. (Meehan named his son Bobby, after RFK.) With Meehan, you can safely assume he's found some angle in campaign-finance reform. When he preens, it looks less like self-righteousness than like someone doing an imitation of it. It's entertaining.

Or, for pure entertainment value, no one beats John McCain. McCain often invokes Teddy Roosevelt when he talks about campaign-finance reform, and in at least one sense the comparison is fair. Like Roosevelt, McCain is drawn to reform not by the reforms themselves, but by what they represent. For McCain, campaign-finance reform isn't an end but a metaphor: the struggle of the little guy against the big guy, the defenseless versus the bully. Trap McCain in a conversation about the actual details of campaign-finance reform and he soon loses focus. He's bored by it.

But he puts on a marvelous show. McCain understands that if you're going to play the reformer, sad-eyed disapproval won't do. You've got to pick up the hatchet. McCain does a terrific Carrie Nation impression. It's effective because on some level it's real. The senator has a genuinely bad temper. He is a genuinely tough guy.

During his first run for office, McCain learned that one of his opponents had tracked down his first wife, looking for dirt. According to a political consultant who worked for him at the time, McCain cornered the man at the next candidate's forum. "I want you to know," McCain said, "that, campaign aside, politics aside, you ever do anything like that again, anything against a person in my family, I will personally beat the shit out of you."

It's impossible to imagine Chris Shays threatening to personally beat the shit out of anyone. But it would be a lot easier to like him if he did. ■



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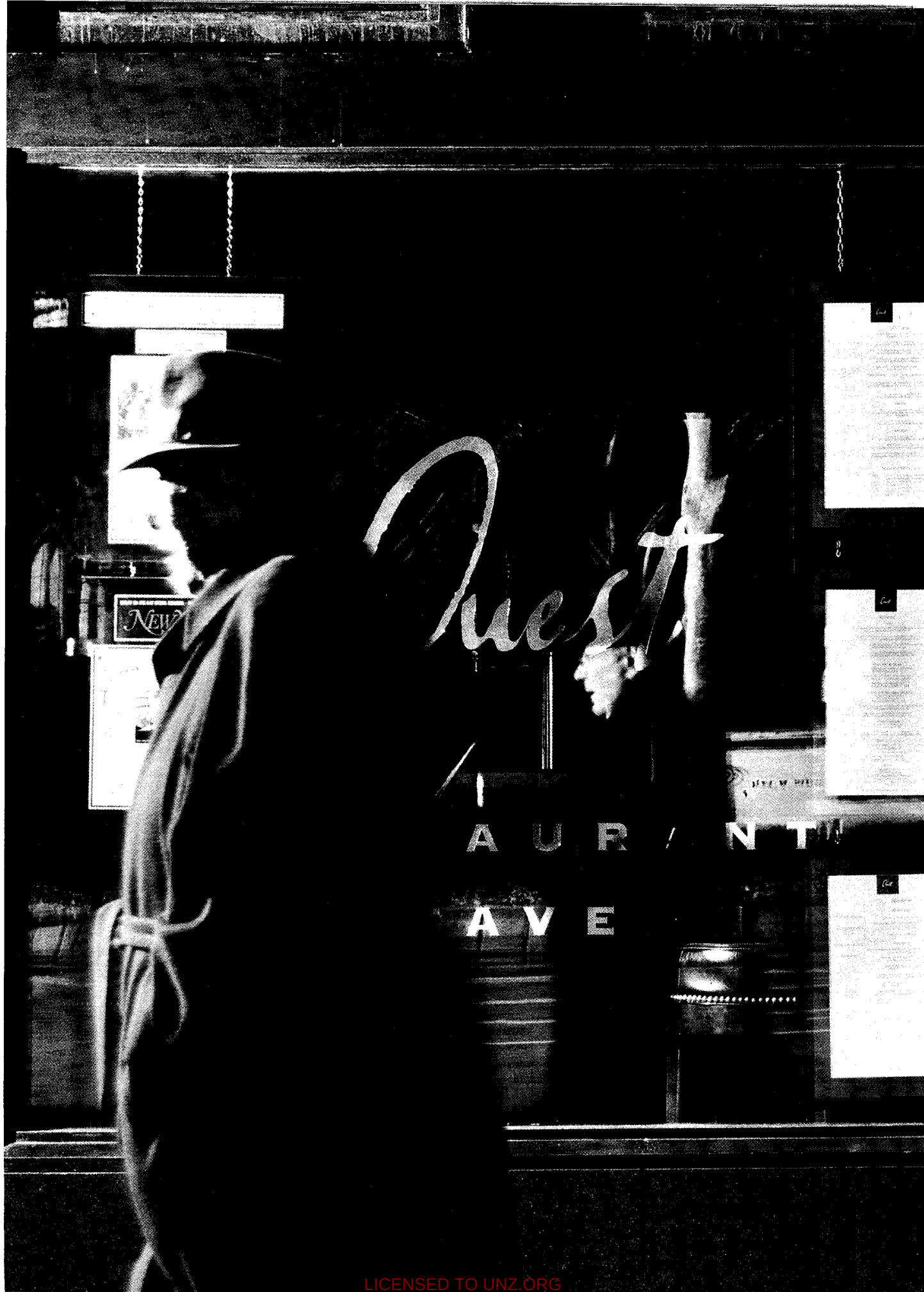


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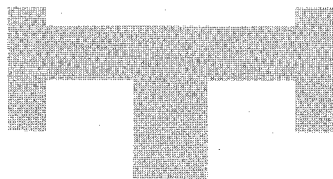


STAKING OUT THE CULINARY WILDERNESS
NORTH OF LINCOLN CENTER, CHEF TOM VALENTI
IS SERVING THE WEST SIDE'S A-LIST A MENU
THAT'S EQUAL PARTS COMFORT FOOD AND
FOUR-STAR INSPIRATION. BY MARION MANEKER

WEST SIDE STORY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ETHAN HILL

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TOM VALENTI STANDS AT THE EDGE OF HIS KITCHEN IN A SPOTLESS WHITE CHEF'S JACKET AND standard-issue black clogs, a maroon-and-tan Ouest baseball cap atop his rather unlikely shoulder-length curls. The brightly lit kitchen opens proscenium-like onto a double-height space that is now the softly lit main dining room of Ouest. Just nine months ago, the L-shaped room was a dry cleaner's on West 84th Street and a coffee shop on Broadway. Today it's the stage for Valenti's star turn—in a neighborhood that has long been a culinary Bermuda Triangle. • Valenti saunters down a wood-paneled passageway and stops at one of the five curved red leather booths that line the corridor and give it a slightly Vegas-

lounge feel. There he chats with some regular customers eager to trade fly-fishing tales. "My fishing season sort of came and went without me," Valenti says, readjusting his cap with a Rodney Dangerfield-ish tic. Then he delivers his punch line: "Now I'm seeking psychiatric help."

He's only half kidding. Since September 11, what would otherwise have been Valenti's spare time has been consumed by Windows of Hope, a fund established to aid the families of food-service workers, mostly from Windows on the World, killed in the World Trade Center. The emotional and physical demands of guiding a \$15 million charity have taken their toll.

Despite the difficult timing, Ouest has become that rare bird—a serious restaurant in a neighborhood that seemed, just last spring, unwilling to accept or support a star chef. Not only a local favorite, Ouest is now the see-and-be-seen joint for the *Meister*-burghers of Central Park West and the East Side. On any given night, you'll find some celebrity glowing from one of the main room's intimate circular booths. Bill Clinton has made it a hangout. David Halber-

fort food, to offer challenging flavors within familiar, atavistic dishes. "Tom knows how to make things taste good," says Alfred Portale, the chef at Gotham Bar and Grill and something like a professional older brother to Valenti. "He knows how to season very, very well. He knows how to capture flavors—and his flavors are strong and clear. His food is sophisticated and accessible. But he's not doing meat loaf . . . or maybe he is."

Actually, he *is* doing meat loaf—but only on Sunday nights. "Alex Witchel called one Sunday," Valenti says of the New York *Times* writer and wife of op-ed columnist Frank Rich. "She said, 'Frank and I are bringing Barbara Walters in tonight. Last time, you ran out of the meat loaf. Could you save us a couple of slices tonight?'"

Setting the city afire with meat loaf might not be many a 42-year-old chef's dream of how to seal his reputation. But that doesn't trouble Valenti. "I've never had three- or four-star aspirations," he admits. "I don't want to be wowed."

"I think he's more focused now than he ever has been in his life," says Beacon chef Waldy Malouf, his longtime friend and co-

Center. After too many afternoons spent looking at overpriced apartments on an empty belly, Valenti had an epiphany: "I said, 'If real estate is this high,'" he recalls, "why isn't there a better restaurant?"

Tom and Abigail had stumbled onto the West Side's secret. "It's a totally different area now," says Bill Telepan, currently the chef at Judson Grill, who in 1996 opened Ansonia on upper Broadway to a slew of good reviews—and empty seats. "If we had opened in 1998, I think we'd still be in business," he says. "You didn't have guys like me living on 86th Street then. We used to live on 76th and West End—the Upper West Side ended at 79th Street. Now you have people spending a million dollars for apartments on 116th Street."

The other change, one that Telepan is experiencing as well, is a baby boom that keeps many new residents with refined culinary tastes close by when they go out. Ouest satisfies the itch for a night out without adding the stress of being far from home.

IN THE END, TOM AND ABIGAIL DECIDED NOT to buy in the West Eighties or Nineties. Instead, they found more space for their money and a home for their five cats and Tom's collection of Arts and Crafts furniture much farther uptown at 157th and Riverside, where they have easy access to the George Washington Bridge. Because even when they don't go upstate, Tom likes to go out for a drive just to clear his head.

The apartment, a rambling three-bedroom with walls painted rich, deep grays, greens, and browns, like the restaurant 70 blocks south, has grounded Valenti and given him ballast. He built the kitchen himself; but he harbors no fantasies about cooking elaborate meals there. The wood-paneled

"If you can capture something from someone's childhood," Valenti says, describing what he aims to evoke with his food, "people really identify with that."

stam ate there recently with Robert Caro; Bryant Gumbel dines often with his fiancée, Hilary Quinlan; Charlie Rose stops by with his belle, newly appointed city-planning commissioner Amanda Burden. ABC's Elizabeth Vargas eats there, as do state attorney general Eliot Spitzer; *Time* magazine's editor, Jim Kelly; and society bandleader Peter Duchin. Not to mention Dustin Hoffman, Kevin Bacon, Julie Andrews, and Steven Spielberg.

Part of what makes Ouest the signal restaurant of the moment is a paradox: We've been trained for decades to demand sophisticated culinary experiences, but we suddenly crave food that reassures as well. Valenti's distinctive talent is to blend the finest French technique with homey com-

founder of Windows of Hope.

Many of Valenti's stories about his own life—at least the ones that aren't about fishing—seem to start with a girl. Which prompts Malouf to add: "And end with one." The story of Ouest does, too. Four years ago, Valenti met Abigail Wolcott, a former model who is now launching her own line of skincare products. They grew tired of fighting the traffic through Manhattan on the journey from their Brooklyn apartment to their fishing cabin on six acres in the Catskills. They decided to look for a place on the Upper West Side, an area both assumed would be affordable even if it wasn't as cheap as their duplex in a Fort Greene brownstone.

What they got instead was a scary education in the cost of real estate above Lincoln

dining room with its divided glass doors houses not a grand table—"When am I going to cook for twelve at home?" he asks—but a Mission-style pool table he found in an antiques store in Syracuse.

For all that, fly-fishing remains the organizing theme in his life. Surprisingly, for a chef, Valenti doesn't keep his catch. Nor does Abigail, herself an accomplished fly-caster who would just as soon leave the hooks off. In the end, it's about respite from the world. "I quickly go to zero," he says, "when I get into a stream with the water rushing around my legs."

"COOKING FOR ME WAS ALWAYS ABOUT GETTING up early and getting moving and organized," Valenti says. "I get to commune with my



QUESTERN ALLIANCE: Valenti's kitchen and dining-room crews gather around the bistro's red leather booths and banquettes.

products, pay attention to the curing and the smoking, before my staff shows up and kicks me out." Much of the flavor in his densely but delicately layered dishes is added long before the final cooking is done during dinner service. That's the only way to create signature dishes like braised lamb shanks with a rich caramelized sweetness that hovers over the humble peasant protein, or silky gravlax resting on a chickpea pancake spiked with unctuous caviar and a spicy mustard oil.

Through his clever pairings, Valenti has elevated earthy, slow-cooked food to an art form, some secrets of which are revealed in his first cookbook, which appears this month from HarperCollins. "I should change the menu," Valenti says with the tone of a father indulging a long-wished-for child. "It's time. But some of the dishes are still getting press.

"I think that if you can capture something from someone's childhood," the chef says in describing the sense memory he aims to evoke with his food, "people really identify with that." Like some secret ingredient, the customer's own sepia-toned culinary touchstones seem to be an integral part of the experience. Take a menu standout like smoked sturgeon served with a poached egg and lardon. How many of his patrons tuck into that appetizer while thoughts of an idealized country breakfast flit subliminally across their palates?

VALENTI'S OWN CULINARY MEMORIES WERE first formed in Ithaca, New York, where he was raised by a single mother who sent him to his grandparents' house after school while

she worked as a legal secretary. As his grandparents baby-sat, Valenti soaked up their traditions: a kitchen garden, secret sauce recipes, and homemade wine. It wasn't until years later, though, after a stint learning basic skills at Ithaca's sole purveyor of French cuisine, that he got his real training.

Moving to Westchester in 1980, Valenti stumbled upon an ad for a personal chef. At the interview, the guy asked, "Have you eaten at Lutèce?" Valenti had never heard of it. He asked, "Do you shop at Dean & DeLuca?"

"I didn't know what he was talking about," Valenti remembers. "But we got to talking about food." And the next thing Valenti knew, he was cooking on the Westchester estate of a private investor with the bizarre proviso that he not repeat any dish for at least 200 meals. (And you thought *Iron Chef* was implausible.)

From there, Valenti drifted into a job in Greenwich, Connecticut, at a branch restaurant of famed French chef Guy Savoy, which led to a stint at the Paris mother ship. "It was frightening not speaking the language," Valenti remembers, even though Savoy put him up until he got his bearings and found a tiny apartment. "If you didn't close the door, you walked right into the shower. You couldn't get up the stairs if you'd had a big meal."

At the Charles de Gaulle airport, on the way home after fifteen months, Valenti ran into Daniel Johnnes, now the sommelier at Montrachet but then just a cocky aspiring cook. Johnnes introduced Valenti to another friend on the same flight back to New York, Alfred Portale, who'd just come from

his own year of training with Michel Guerard. The three Americans compared notes. Not long after, Portale invited Valenti to be his sous-chef at Gotham Bar and Grill.

"I left nothing up to anyone's individual interpretation," Portale remembers of the difficulty he and Valenti had in taking labor-intensive French food and remaking it for a New York kitchen. "There were no squiggles, there were no free-forms. It was all very precise." It had to be. Portale, a former jewelry designer, shocked customers by literally raising food on the plate in architectural designs that soon transformed American eating.

Reinventing the restaurant meal was no casual project, and Portale relied on Valenti for more than just his technique. "I was *very* intense in the kitchen," Portale admits. "Tom is a little more relaxed. I think it was a nice moderating influence for me because I used to get incredibly wound up during service."

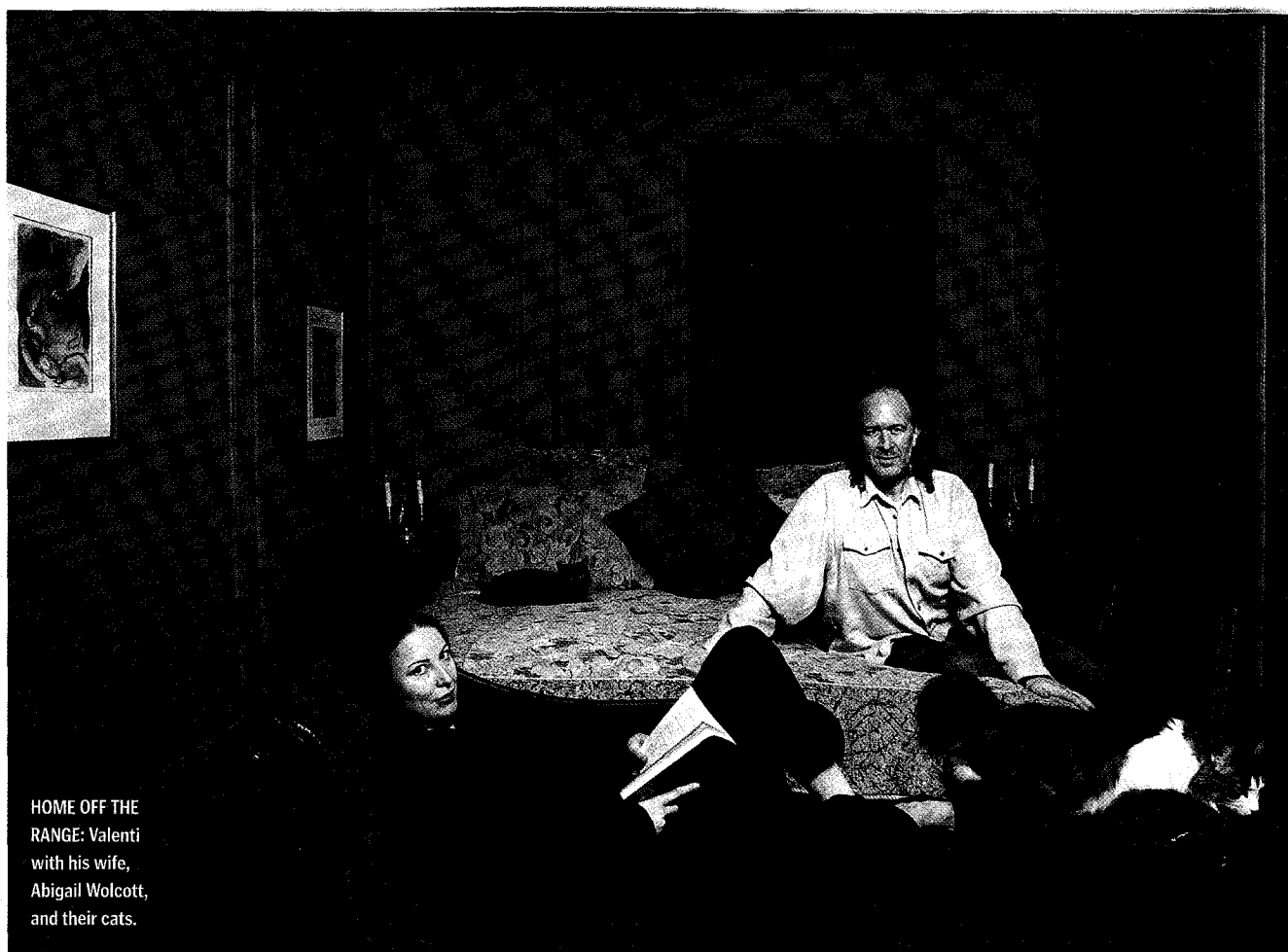
Gotham became a perennial three-star destination and, perhaps more important, a proving ground for a generation of New York chefs. And if Gotham U. was great for cooks, it was also a training camp for the front of the house. Alison Becker worked there as a manager. Sunday nights at Gotham—when Becker ran the room and Valenti was in charge of the kitchen, cooking up special dishes for "family meal"—were soon dubbed the Sunday Night Supper Club. "Sunday nights felt so good," Becker says. "It was a show with understudies on. Tom liked my timing with the book. It was like a marriage. We just had a great feel for each other."

A marriage they soon consummated by opening Alison on Dominick Street. "All of us were young and arrogant," Becker remembers. "We're talking a couple stock-market crashes ago. When we first opened, we tried to limit the menu to country French, Basque cooking. It was all very sumptuous, very sensual. People would just fall into the velvet banquettes with the candlelight—and the smell would drift up from the plate."

For five years, they drew diners from all over the city to a lonely windswept block just a loud honk from the entrance to the Holland Tunnel. Both partners received a great deal of press attention. And during that period, both went through the standard life changes. Becker got married; Valenti got married and divorced.

"When Tommy left," says a regretful Becker, who now lives in Sag Harbor and owns Alison by the Beach, "there was a lot of stuff going on in his life. We had an intense five years. I wish I'd told him to take a leave of absence."

Cooling off took some time. Valenti had a brief affair with the Zaccaro family, running the kitchen at Cascabel, then another whirlwind romance with Ken Aretsky's Butterfield 81. Through the wilderness



HOME OFF THE RANGE: Valenti with his wife, Abigail Wolcott, and their cats.

years, Valenti kept occupied and kept up the traditions he'd learned in France and perfected with Portale.

"TOM IS A REGULAR GUY," PORTALE SAYS. "HE'S open, unpretentious. Some chefs are a little bit removed from the dishwashers and the cooks. Tom and I both came from fairly simple beginnings. We haven't forgotten our roots, so to speak."

So it makes sense that when the World Trade Center collapsed, obliterating Windows on the World and 73 employees, Valenti piped up with a way to help. And recruiting participants in the age of celebrity chefs was as simple as putting together a Live Aid-style benefit—in this case, of course, a meal. "I called Mario," Valenti says of the phone tree he started with his good friend Mario Batali. "I called Bobby. I called Charlie. No one said no," he remembers. "It was just so easy."

"Tom's gregarious and has a generous way about him," says Malouf, of Beacon—a restaurant also owned by Windows on the World proprietor David Emil. "The way he could call and talk to people and get them onboard, that's his unique talent." Windows of Hope eventually involved 4,500 restaurants, each of which took some or all of the profits from their October 11 take and donated it to Windows of Hope. More than a million people were in-

volved that night, each diner sending a few dollars back to New York.

"It hasn't been that easy. There's been a lot of pressure on what to do with this money," Emil says. "Tom's been unbelievably selfless. He's been so focused on what would be good for these families."

"In a city that's often described as uncaring or cold, this gesture is dramatic," David Campbell observes from his position at the Community Service Society, the Windows of Hope partner which also works with the New York Times' Neediest Fund.

The fund has made a distribution of \$10,000 to each of the 124 families, has invested in health insurance for them, and is planning to offer financial-planning services. "We have 112 children," Malouf says of the victims, not counting two still waiting to be born. "We want to offer money for education from preschool to college. I don't want to knock dishwashers; I need them. But if these kids want an education, it's worth investing our time and efforts into that."

This last point seems to touch Valenti most deeply. Few chefs, even celebrity chefs, would have been voted Most Likely to Succeed in high school. Valenti is no exception. Not college-educated himself, he has spent the past several months in an internal struggle over what to do with the remaining money: offer scholarships that the surviving children might never use or invest in

early-childhood education that might make an immediate difference in their lives.

"These are the people who get us through our days," Valenti says, explaining his own connection to the victims and their survivors. "They always showed up for work; they were never late. And once a year, they'd bring their families around for Christmas."

"Those are the people out there now," Valenti adds, holding his voice in check. Then tears well up before he turns his head to discreetly wipe his eyes.

SCOTT VARRICCHIO PACKS GARLIC, EXTRA-VIRGIN olive oil, and thyme onto a portobello mushroom one morning last week as David Bowie, on the CD of the Concert for New York City, launches into "Heroes" over Oquest's stereo system. "Tom's cooking requires a lot of extra prep," he says. "But it's worth it."

At the bar, Valenti is doing a quick telephone interview with a Philadelphia radio station to promote his book. "I want my food to satisfy a craving, not an intellect," he says, winding up the conversation.

Valenti admits that September 11 hasn't hurt his restaurant. To the contrary, with reasonable prices and affluent neighbors sticking close to home, he's booked every weekend for eight weeks down the line. If this keeps up, he's going to miss this year's fishing season, too. ■

TAKE THE 1 TRAIN

JEAN GEORGES AND PICHOLINE ARE JUST TWO REASONS THE WEST SIDE IS COOKIN'.

• A

947 COLUMBUS AVENUE, NEAR 106TH STREET (212-531-1643)

Why: Mom-and-pop partners Marc Solomon and Blue Grant have infused a bleak stretch of upper Columbus with downtown flavor and a mellow neighborly vibe. A recent expansion brought the seating capacity to a whopping 24, and with only five entrées, the organic French-Caribbean menu is just as petite.

You can't get this downtown: Jerk duck-leg confit.

Scene: Columbia undergrads, downtown hipsters, neighbors.

How much: \$10 and under.

• Cafe Luxembourg

200 WEST 70TH STREET (212-873-7411)

Why: Nineteen years ago, partners Lynn Wagenknecht and Keith McNally (who's long since decamped) looked north from their perch at Odeon and saw a vast wasteland in the shadow of Fairway. They offered an intimate Left Bank aesthetic, and locals and Lincoln Center patrons alike flocked there for steak-frites, cassoulet, and other bistro classics (not to mention one great burger). The soft light, smart staff, zinc bar, and reliable, sometimes surprising kitchen make it a perennial.

Scene: Unrepentant Francophiles, social smokers, and neighborhood aesthetes.

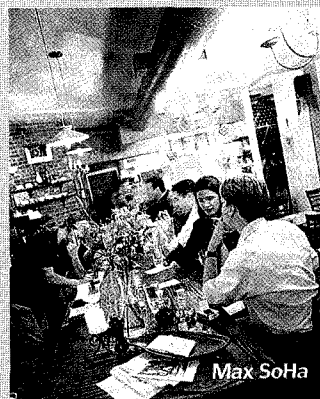
How much: Dinner entrées, \$18.95 to \$29.50.

• Calle Ocho

446 COLUMBUS AVENUE, NEAR 81ST STREET (212-873-5025)

Why: As a protégé of Chicama's Douglas Rodriguez, chef Alex Garcia was in on the Nuevo Latino craze at the very beginning. He established a high-design beach-head in a precinct full of humble Chino-Latino lunch counters, thus enabling thirsty denizens to wash down their rice and beans with minty mojitos.

Scene: Buena Vista Social Clubbers with a yen for lobster seiche



with passion-fruit mojo, Peruvian shrimp chowder, and Cuban-style steak-frites.

How much: Entrées, \$16 to \$28.

• Gennaro

665 AMSTERDAM AVENUE, NEAR 92ND STREET (212-665-5348)

Why: You'd think the neighborhood had never heard of pasta the way it crowds this trattoria night after night. Chef-owner Gennaro Picone wisely expanded into the space next door, but you'll still have to wait for a table. The lavish antipasto and fork-tender braised lamb shank are worth it.

Scene: First dates, carbo-loaders, the anti-Carmine's contingent.

How much: Pasta and entrées, \$7.50 to \$13.95.

• Jean Georges

ONE CENTRAL PARK WEST (212-299-3900)

Why: Do you really need to ask? Jean-Georges Vongerichten is a master of the unexpected flavor combination, the textural counterpoint, and the dramatic presentation. Dishes like braised pork belly with brioche and Gewürztraminer-flavored cabbage, and seaweed-steamed dorade in a tamarind-ginger-and-cumin infusion, evoke his Alsatian roots and Asian travels. And he's something of a fashion plate, too.

Scene: The city's *riche*—nouveau and otherwise—engaged in quiet, reverential contemplation of caper-raisin emulsion and freshly foraged herb salads.

Deals on meals: The almost-as-el-

egant barroom, Nougatine, has its own menus, including a \$38 prix fixe dinner and a \$20.02 lunch, served year-round.

How much: \$115 tasting menu; \$85 prix fixe dinner.

• Max SoHa

1274 AMSTERDAM AVENUE, AT 123RD STREET (212-531-2221)

Why: Probably the best Southern Italian-cooking bargain in the city, Max's cozy uptown branch offers memory-haunting lasagna and Neapolitan-style meat loaf, Tuscan meat-sauced pasta, and beautifully prepared fish specials. A well-priced wine list and intense lemon sorbet are just icing on the cake.

Scene: Families arrive before 6:30; afterward, singles and dates take over.

How much: \$15 and under.

• Nick & Toni's Café

100 WEST 67TH STREET (212-496-4000)

Why: Because this Manhattan spinoff of the East Hampton classic is literally a hot spot, with flavorful Mediterranean food sizzling and roasting in the wood-burning oven. Ingredients are top-notch, wines well selected, and the oven-roasted chops and whole fish consistently satisfying.

Weekend special: Pizza night on Sunday gives John's a run for its thin-crust money.

Scene: ABC execs at lunch; post-IMAX dates at dinner; Reebok members doing *après*-workout damage at the bar.

How much: Dinner entrées, \$17 to \$28.



• Picholine

35 WEST 64TH STREET (212-724-8585)

Why: Chef-owner Terrance Brennan must rue the day he put wild-

mushroom-and-duck risotto on the menu, since the faithful won't ever let him take it off. But let's not forget the luxurious sea-urchin panna cotta, Saturday's braised organic-lamb shank, and the passion-fruit soufflé. And did we mention the cheese?

Scene: As quiet and sophisticated as it gets in the pre-theater Lincoln Center hubbub.

How much: Entrées, \$28 to \$42.

• Ruby Foo's Uptown

2182 BROADWAY, NEAR 77TH STREET (212-724-6700)

Why: Because owner Steve Hanson is one of the few people who try to please everyone and actually manage to succeed most of the time. Despite how misguided it seems to offer sushi, dim sum, divine spare ribs, Southeast Asian green-curry chicken, and the world's tallest chocolate cake, it all seems to work.

Scene: Kids love it. So do groups. Not your low-key demographic.

How much: Main plates, \$10.50 to \$24.95.

• @SQC

270 COLUMBUS AVENUE, NEAR 72ND STREET (212-579-0100)

Why: Scott Campbell single-handedly made brunch—the meal everyone loves to hate—lovable. And he's no slouch at dinnertime either. Go for Campbell's home-smoked fish and meats, scrambled eggs with scallops and Montrachet, apple-cinnamon pancake soufflé, Caesar salad, and roasted chicken. Save room for sublime homemade ice creams.

Scene: Stroller moms by day, foodies by night, hot-chocolate freaks whenever.

How much: Brunch dishes, \$9 to \$12; dinner entrées, \$17 to \$24.

And let's not forget: **Barney Greengrass** for the epitome of the New York lox-and-eggs experience, **Formica and all**. **Gabriel's** for classy Italian fare, warm service, and the perfect pre-Lincoln Center location. **Gabriela's** for tangy, crispy-skinned rotisserie chicken and a trio of tasty moles. **Nêo** for sushi exoticism where you'd least expect it. And **Saigon Grill** for unstintingly authentic Vietnamese at Chinatown prices.



JUSTICE? DENIED:
Defense attorney
Joel Rudin.

THE DEFENSE RESTS— PERMANENTLY

Innovations like mandatory sentencing and the plea bargaining it engenders are stacking the criminal-justice system against defendants while beginning to make superstar defense lawyers obsolete. No one feels sorry for the lawyers, of course. But is something valuable—like, say, the presumption of innocence—in danger of being lost? BY CRAIG HOROWITZ

IT WAS THE KIND OF MOMENT DEFENSE ATTORNEYS live for. At a little past six on a Friday evening last March, Ben Brafman stood next to his high-profile (and highly controversial) client, Sean “Puffy” Combs, in a seventh-floor Manhattan courtroom and braced himself for the verdict. The intense pressure of a two-month trial that featured wall-to-wall media coverage, 60 prosecution witnesses, and the prospect of a fifteen-year sentence had clearly gotten to him. Brafman had barely slept in the three days the jury had been deliberating.

When jury forewoman Brenda Kronenberg spoke the words *not guilty* on each of the five charges stemming from a shooting in a Times Square club, Brafman reflexively shouted “Yes!,” hugged his client, and buried his tear-streaked face in his hands. Later, he would say he was so overwhelmed he thought he was going to collapse.

As Brafman took his victory lap around the talk-show circuit, the whole episode seemed to reinforce the notion that the best legal-defense talent regularly trumps public opinion—hadn’t the press virtually convicted Puffy, even as his glamorous girlfriend, Jennifer Lopez, deserted him?—not to mention the government’s prosecutorial strategies. But even as Brafman was soaking up the accolades for his courtroom performance, he knew something most of the public didn’t: Not only are come-from-

behind defense victories becoming more and more difficult to achieve, but simply going to trial has become almost prohibitively risky. One of the reasons Brafman was so overcome with emotion when the Combs acquittal came down was that it was so rare—so rare that many of the best criminal lawyers in town are ready to quit.

According to Brafman and dozens of other defense attorneys I talked to, the criminal-justice system has undergone a profound transformation. In fact, Brafman’s big win was an anomaly, and the era of the superstar defense attorney, part gladiator and part performance artist, may be coming to an end.

Criminal-defense attorneys maintain that, with the exception of the most minor offenses or the most serious—and when the accused is a celebrity—actual trials are almost rare now. Changes in the legal system have given prosecutors the power to exact extraordinary penalties from defendants who choose to go to trial and lose. The deck is so stacked against defendants who plead innocent, they say, that the average defendant doesn’t have the luxury of taking his case before a jury. Why fight when the chances of victory are small and the penalty for losing is huge? Everyone is looking for a deal.

Nowadays, defense attorneys argue, justice is bartered in the prosecutor’s office, not fought for in a courtroom. “All the

skills I had developed as a litigator can no longer be put to use as a criminal attorney,” says Joel Rudin, who at 48 has been practicing for nearly 25 years. “The primary skill needed for doing criminal work is as a negotiator to deal with the prosecutors. But since you’re not on even ground with them, you’re not so much negotiating as pleading. The system has totally perverted the values a lot of us grew up with.

“Practicing criminal law,” Rudin continues, “has become draining, dispiriting, and completely unsatisfying.”

“The prosecution wins probably 98 percent of the time,” says defense lawyer Richard Levitt, who grew up the child of two lawyers.

Hugh H. Mo, a former deputy police commissioner and Manhattan prosecutor who’s now a defense attorney, puts it this way: “Nowadays, if you get caught up in the criminal-justice system, they’re gonna take a piece of your ass—one way or another.”

OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES, THE JUSTICE system has been armed with enormous weapons, weapons designed to ensure not only the arrest of criminals but their speedy conviction and long-term incarceration as well. No budgetary or legislative resources have been spared. There are now hundreds of federal crimes (think securities fraud, the Internet, money laundering,

child pornography, and so on), whereas once upon a time federal offenses were pretty much limited to kidnapping, bank robbery, mail fraud, and treason. New York's penal code has been expanded from about 200 pages to more than 600. When Hugh Mo was an assistant district attorney in Robert Morgenthau's office in the early eighties, for example, there was one criminal investigator and about 150 prosecu-

several thousand pounds of cocaine into the U.S. and trucking it across the country. He was facing 25 years to life, according to the guidelines, for his crimes. Rather than go to trial, he gave information to the government, and in return he got a term of six and a half years.

Another defendant before the same judge was a man in his fifties who was charged with buying one kilo of cocaine

for \$3,000. As it turned out, what he actually got was not cocaine but cocaine base—crack. The system treats one kilo of crack the same as 100 kilos of coke, so the guy was facing fifteen to twenty years. But his predicament was made even worse by two factors. He wasn't in the drug business, so he had no one to inform on and no information to peddle for a deal. And he wanted to fight to prove what he claimed was his innocence.

So he rolled the dice and went to trial. He lost and was sentenced to fifteen and a half years. The prosecutor had offered him a plea up front, for which he would have gotten three to five years. And if he'd had information to trade—or been willing to work on the street as a government informant—he could've gotten the whole thing reduced to just one year. At sentencing, the judge told the prosecutor she'd like to give him a lesser sentence than what the guidelines mandated. The prosecutor actually moved for a stiffer sentence and said he'd appeal if the judge reduced it.

“Everybody knows now that if you go to trial and get convicted, you're going to get massacred, you're going to get the maximum sentence allowed,” says Murray Richman. “Even innocent people often aren't willing to risk fifteen or twenty years in jail by going to trial.”

tors. Today the office has 80 investigators and nearly 600 prosecutors.

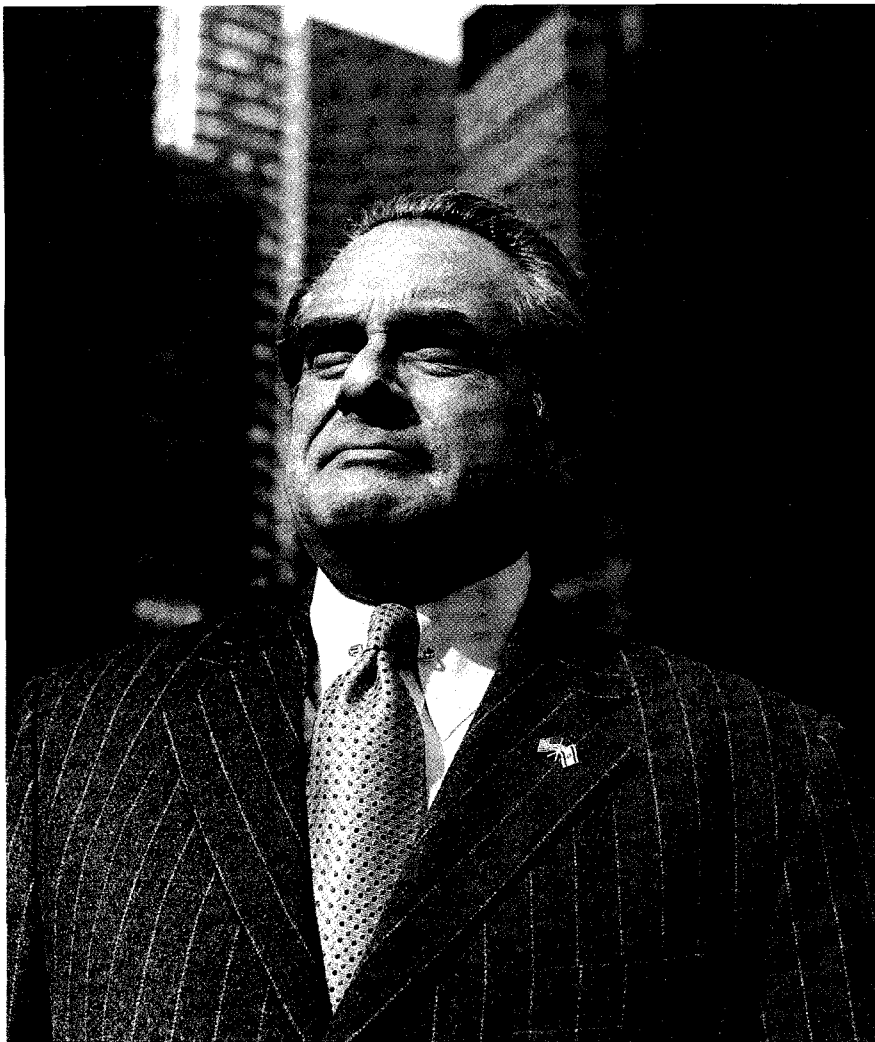
And prosecutors, meanwhile, have been given an arsenal that includes measures like mandatory minimum sentences, the Rockefeller drug laws, three-strikes statutes, repeat-felony-offender rules, and the federal sentencing guidelines. While no rational person would like to see a return to the permissiveness and lack of accountability that used to be the order of the day, the overwhelming power of the criminal-justice system has raised a compelling question: Has the presumption of innocence and the constitutional guarantee of a trial by a jury of one's peers been compromised by measures designed to speed the accused through a system with fewer opportunities to escape?

“Everybody knows now that if you go to trial and get convicted, you're going to get massacred, you're going to get the maximum sentence allowed,” says Murray Richman, the dean of defense attorneys in the Bronx courts. “Even innocent people often aren't willing to risk fifteen or twenty years or more in jail by going to trial. Not when they can get it down to one to four if they plead.”

The most desirable currency (and the real wild card) in this criminal-justice flea market is cooperation. The best deals are available when a defendant is willing and able to turn someone else in or provide useful information about other crimes. “What we really have are two systems now,” says Rudin. “One for cooperators and one for noncooperators.”

Rudin, a pleasant-looking man with bushy gray hair and an earnest, concerned manner, tells the story of a guy who was charged with playing a key role in bringing





FIGHTING THE LAW: Bronx defense attorney Murray Richman (left) and Puffy defender Ben Brafman.

"The point here," says Rudin, "is that the guidelines haven't resulted in uniform sentencing, which is the reason they were adopted, and if someone has the temerity to actually exercise their right to trial, the government will make them pay for it if they lose."

THE CRIMINAL-JUSTICE SYSTEM BEGAN TO change rapidly in the mid-eighties, when the federal sentencing guidelines were adopted. An unprecedented crime wave had been raging across the country more or less since the late sixties, and elected officials—this was the Reagan era—decided the time had come to do something about it.

The idea was simple: If someone was convicted of a federal crime—say, bank robbery—he would serve a specific prison sentence, regardless of how nice he seemed to be, who the judge was, or how good a lawyer he hired. The intent was to ensure uniformity—fairness—in the imposition of sentences.

The state courts also ratcheted up their sentencing rules, adopting statutes that called for mandatory minimums. The dra-

conian paradigm was established by the the Rockefeller drug laws adopted in 1973. "Back in the early seventies," says Jim Kindler, chief assistant D.A. in the Manhattan D.A.'s office, "there were only three crimes that had mandatory sentences: murder, kidnapping, and high-level narcotics. For all other crimes, the judges had significant leeway. That's all changed."

Because the guidelines mandate serious prison terms, many criminals facing these double-digit sentences don't want to go to trial. It's too risky. They'd much rather plead guilty and make some kind of deal for a shorter sentence.

This gives prosecutors unparalleled power and has turned judges, many lawyers argue, into little more than functionaries. Federal judge Jack Weinstein, who actually had refused for a period of time to handle drug cases because of the lengthy mandatory sentences, says that while judges do still have some latitude—"We have a variety of devices available to us to exercise discretion and to depart from the sentencing guidelines," says Weinstein—prosecutors have the upper hand. "Where the power has really shifted to

the prosecutors is because they're the ones who can offer a defendant a deal."

"Defense lawyers really feel like they have no job anymore. It's like all the lawyering's been taken out of being a lawyer," says Ellen Yaroshefsky, a professor at Cardozo law school.

And, of course, it means that the demand for high-price legal-defense talent has dried up. Not only do the lawyers get to try cases much less often, but their fees have been steadily falling as well. Since many accused criminals know as soon as they're arrested that they're going to make a deal, why spend a lot of money to hire an expensive private attorney?

It's also taken much of the challenge—and all of the sport—out of defense work. "This work used to be fun," says Rudin, "but the fun was in competing head-to-head on a relatively level playing field with the prosecution, trying to be the best advocate you could for your client. But that's no longer realistic because the prosecutors hold all the cards and the opportunities for success are so small. It's become virtually impossible to fight the system."

Consequently, Rudin says, very few people do. "Prosecutors are shocked, *shocked*, when someone comes in and wants to fight for his client in the old tradition as an adversary. Many defense lawyers don't even know how to fight a case anymore. For twenty years I've been marching down to the prosecutor's office to beg for mercy, and I'm sick of it. I can't do it anymore."

Laurie McPherson, who spent eight years as a defense attorney, concurs. "Very few criminal cases get to trial," she says. "Everybody's cooperating, and I got sick and tired of just writing sentencing memos."

In the last criminal case she tried, McPherson says she represented a man in his sixties accused of distributing marijuana. "They never found so much as a seed directly connected to my client," she remembers, "but the government brought in three thugs, convicted felons, to testify. As a result, my client got 27 years, a veritable life sentence." The prosecutor, she adds, even asked for a longer sentence. "It's tough, it really wears on you, and the rewards just aren't there anymore." McPherson has given up criminal law for the most part, concentrating on civil work.

Some of those who've stayed have become so uncomfortable representing cooperators that they've actually begun to refuse to do it. "I view my role as a criminal-defense lawyer as a buffer against the state and a watchdog on abuses by the prosecution, the police, and the judges," says Diarmuid White, who's been practicing nearly twenty years. "When you represent a cooperating defendant, you're actually sitting down with the gov-

ernment and helping them make cases against other people, and I don't think that's good for our democracy. I won't do it. I lose business, but I sleep well at night."

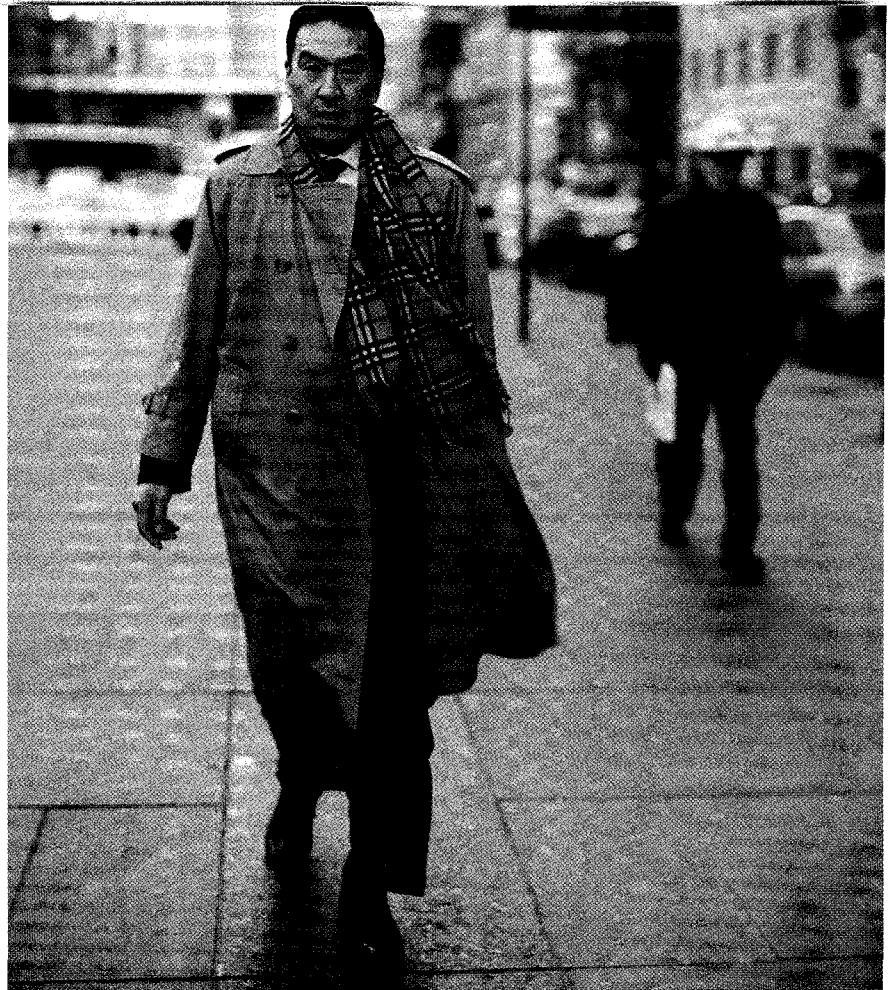
Rudin argues that the pursuit of punishment at all cost has caused those in the system to lose sight of everything else: "Loyalty to friends, to family, is an important value. So what happens to the person who gets set up by some desperate informant who'll say anything to save his own skin? Now that person is in the same position, being asked to give up friends, family, anybody to save themselves. The system acts like this is the highest virtue. And if someone has too much loyalty to do this, or simply doesn't have anyone to give up anyway, the system will then destroy him. I really don't want to be a part of that system any longer."

RUDIN IS CERTAINLY NOT ALONE IN HIS FEELINGS. Among defense lawyers all over the country, the rumble of discontent has been growing louder for some time. Law journals and trade-association publications regularly carry articles by defense lawyers railing about the problems they face. These diatribes cover everything from serious legal issues (the erosion of a defendant's rights and the enormous increase in the prosecutor's power) to business problems (a shrinking client pool and smaller fees) to the increasingly degrading way they're treated by the courts (since September 11, defense lawyers are no longer allowed to enter many courthouses through the same entrance as judges and prosecutors, which often means long waits to go through security). "We have been emasculated by the system," says Hugh Mo.

"I'm angry, I'm frustrated, and I'm upset," says Lawrence S. Goldman, president-elect of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. "This has become a less pleasant profession, a less remunerative profession, and a profession in which it is far more difficult to be successful."

"We went through a twenty-year war on crime and a twenty-year war on drugs," says activist and lawyer Gerry Lefcourt. "And the result is what I call the Tyranny of Small Decisions. Everything has gone their way. From the appointment of conservative judges to the extraordinary budgets for every aspect of law enforcement, to the astonishing volume of criminal-justice legislation put forward every year by politicians frightened of being labeled soft on crime, each decision has pecked away at citizens' rights and served to promulgate the multifaceted intimidation of the defense bar."

Even the gregarious Murray Richman has lately taken a distinctly gloomy view. "I now tell young people not to go into criminal law," says Richman, whose own



BAR NONE: Defense attorney Hugh H. Mo (left) and former defense attorney Laurie McPherson.

daughter Stacey has been practicing with him for five years. "I tell them it's a dead end, that there's no future in the criminal-justice system for a young lawyer today. To me that's truly, truly heartbreaking."

Ron Kliegerman, who has spent the past 30 years as a lawyer and whose practice includes representation of the firefighters union, goes one step further. "If I had it to do all over again, I wouldn't even go to law school."

In fact, O.J. was an anomaly. The big trials that have captured the public imagination in the past decade, and vastly enriched their legal stars—think David Boies—have mostly involved corporate litigation and class-action lawsuits. Meanwhile, the cachet of criminal lawyers, once admired as the swaggering, cocky, self-absorbed risk takers of the legal profession, has plummeted.

"Between the abuse you take from your clients and the way you're treated in the courts," says defense attorney Richard Rosenberg, "a lot of us feel this business is dead now, that it's over."

"Because of what's happened to our role in the system, nobody takes defense lawyers seriously," says Richman. "We're looked at as money-grubbing, mean-spir-

ited people who are trying to screw the government and get guilty people off."

Except, of course, by those people whose freedom is at stake. "No one speaks well of a criminal-defense attorney," says Brafman, "until it's their ass that's in the hot seat. Then suddenly you're the most important person in America."

BEFORE THE MANDATORY GUIDELINES WENT into effect, when someone was convicted at trial, there was still plenty of wiggle room when it came to sentencing because the judge would ultimately make the decision.

He could and usually did take all kinds of factors into account when sending someone to prison, from what kind of person they were to how much remorse they displayed to what, if any, unusual circumstances might have motivated them to commit the crime. Now the judge has virtually no discretionary power unless the prosecutor agrees to offer a letter of downward departure that frees him from the guidelines and says the defendant should get a reduced sentence.

"It's a very unfortunate development that young prosecutors with little if any life experience are given enormous power to exercise," says Brafman. "Part of my frus-

tration is that not every criminal case involves a bad person doing something bad. Many times it involves a good person who's done something bad, and those distinctions now get blurred in the system. I spend a substantial amount of my time and effort lobbying the prosecution on charging decisions because this is one of the most important moments in a case."

The great irony here is that while the guidelines were adopted to eliminate disparity in punishment, they often produce exactly the opposite result, because deal-making puts all the inequity back. If a defendant is willing to skip trial and plead guilty, the likelihood is the prosecution will offer him a reduced sentence. However, since these deals are usually proffered up front, right after arrest and indictment, taking an offer means the defendant sacrifices his right to file motions and even to learn what kind of evidence the prosecution has.

The defense lawyer is operating in the dark and essentially has to take the word of the prosecutor when he says he has the goods on a defendant.

Not surprisingly, U.S. Attorney Alan Vinegrad, who has successfully prosecuted such high-profile defendants as Justin Volpe and Charles Schwarz for the torture of Abner Louima, has a different view. "The sentencing guidelines have significantly changed the

system," he acknowledges, sitting in his Brooklyn office with its extraordinary view of lower Manhattan. "But the change has been positive. They've provided more meaningful sentences where it's appropriate and a greater degree of consistency."

Vinegrad, who fits the classic tough-but-fair description, points out that the guidelines are not a "straitjacket," and in half the cases handled by his office, a lighter sentence than the one called for in the guidelines is imposed. And only a little less than a quarter of these reductions are a reward for cooperation.

"The U.S. attorney's office has the top people in the legal profession, who work very hard for much less money than they could make in private practice," he says. "And they are here to do justice. That

means putting the bad guys away and not prosecuting the wrong people."

MOST CITIZENS, OF COURSE, APPLAUD THE fact that the criminal-justice system has become tougher, less flexible, and more adept at locking people up for longer periods of time. And what difference does it make if a bunch of self-important, overpaid defense attorneys find their jobs more difficult and less satisfying?

"When you surrender liberty for security, you have neither security nor liberty," says Richman. "I don't mean to get on my high horse here, but we are liberty's last champions. We have to keep the government honest. We have to hold them to a strict standard. We're the rocks upon which the ocean breaks. After us is the deluge."

“ In her last case that went to trial, Laurie McPherson's client, a man in his sixties indicted for marijuana trafficking, “got 27 years, a veritable life sentence,” she says, after the government got three convicted felons to testify against him. “It’s tough. It really wears on you.” ”



There is, however, a simpler image to consider. "Once a year a neighbor or a friend or someone I know will come to me and say their son or their nephew or their co-worker got arrested," says Diarmuid White. "And they will invariably say they can't believe how they were treated. It's always somebody who's pro-police and pro-law-and-order—until it comes home and they see how things actually work. They're always shocked."

None of the lawyers I talked to had any reason to believe things would change anytime soon. "It's actually gotten tougher," says defense attorney Joe Tacopina. "Think about how it is since September 11. I walk into the courtroom and the proceedings begin. I stand and say, 'Joseph Tacopina for the defense.' And across the aisle, the prosecutor stands up and says, 'So-and-so on behalf of the United States of America.' Every person in the jury box is wearing a flag pin. And I think, *Man, this is not going to be easy.*"

Judge Weinstein, however, who takes a somewhat longer view, says penalties, particularly for first-time offenders, have already begun to come down. "All of our institutions are very complex," he says, looking for a reason to be hopeful, "but ultimately pragmatism will prevail." ■

FABULOUS FALL

Bursting with energy, New York Fashion Week turned out to be one of the best in a long, long time. Honorable mentions to Calvin, Donna, Michael, Narciso, Ralph, Marc, and Oscar, who, with every American thread, showed us fashion's more relevant than ever. So what if there were fewer celebs and the shows were smaller? The clothes were absolutely fabulous. But don't just take it from us. Listen to the people who were there. **BY MARK HOLGATE AND AMY LARocca**

DONNA KARAN, designer: "I had a message, which was to celebrate New York: the drive and sexiness of the city. Right now, for me, it's really important that the word *fun* is on everyone's lips. It's about letting loose, having a release, enjoying sensuality. I've really got into dancing lately—any kind of dancing. It's a great way to feel a release from day-to-day living. After September 11, I think we were all searching for that little piece of nostalgia, and I found it by returning to black. People are always saying to me, 'You always do black, Donna!,' but this time it was different. I mixed the black with brown, the black with blue, added texture to it to enrich it. I used leather, pony skin, double-faced cashmere, and satin, some of which we washed so that they had this soft, worn-already feel to them; they would feel like a favorite sweater. I didn't want anything in the collection that felt too sharp and don't-touch-me."

MICHAEL KORS, designer: "One of my clients, who is a shopper of Olympic strength, called me yesterday. She told me that she'd sat at home and had watched my show on *Full Frontal Fashion* on

MetroTV. And I realized that with seating being so limited, a lot of people have been doing the same thing; it's become the car crash of the Upper East Side—you just can't tear your eyes away from it.

"You can talk as much as you like about how people are staying at home more, or that they're spending more time with their families, but the simple fact of the matter is that women still want to look feminine and sexy. And they want things that are practical and indulgent: an anorak lined in sable, jeans hand-stitched, what looks like a straightforward skirt but has been constructed from so many pieces of suede. No woman now shops thinking in trends—*It has to be in pink*. She knows that there are just a few pieces that she has to have."

ED BURSTELL, retailer, Henri Bendel: "It was a terrific week for retailers. There wasn't that element of people trying to go over the top. There were lots of nostalgic, homemade references, things that look like they'd been made by Grandma. I felt that a lot of the younger designers that we sell went to the next level—Matthew Williamson, Luella Bartley, and Alice Roi. Cath-



HELMUT LANG



MICHAEL KORS



NARCISO RODRIGUEZ



MARC JACOBS



BILL BLASS



BEHNAZ SARAFPOUR



CHADO RALPH RUCCI



DONNA KARAN



CALVIN KLEIN



OSCAR DE LA RENTA

UNDER COVER>

When it comes to coats, *comfort, comfort, comfort* is the mantra. Next winter's top layer is luxurious without looking ostentatious. What to buy: Even the most austere wrap-and-tie coats have a sense of ease now. Major must-haves are the fur-lined parkas (throw over everything from folksy dresses to miniskirts) and the sweeping maxi. Even more flexible is the military-spiced double-breasted coat, which promises to look as good with a pair of the new wider pants as it does with an ornate metallic skirt.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN LECCA



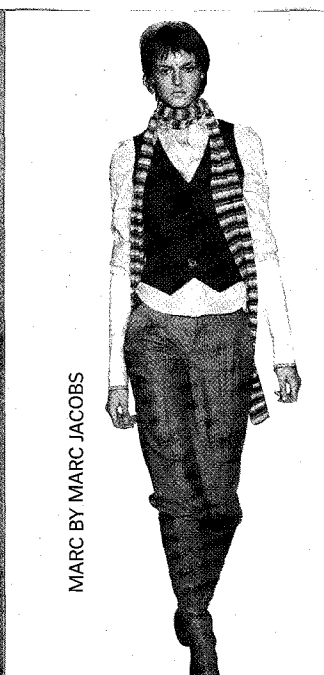
KATAYONE ADELI



CHAIKEN



JILL STUART



MARC BY MARC JACOBS



CHAIKEN



BALENCIAGA

STEP AHEAD>

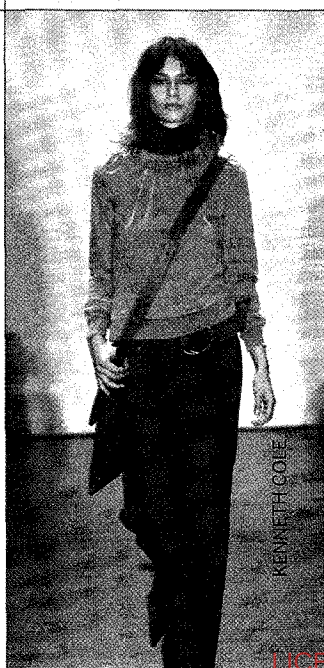
Pants are in for a serious revival this fall. Most designers are favoring a more relaxed look than we've seen for some time. You can still wear them with something high, but at the shows they were partnered with low, square heels or flats. What to buy: Cropped pants can be tucked, gauch-style, into seventies-esque leather boots (though if you tried this the first time around, it's probably best not repeated). Safe bet for maximum wear time—go for the masculine, low-slung look.



MICHAEL KORS



LUELLA



KENNETH COLE



HELMUT LANG

erine Malandrino evolved her love affair with Americana, Zac Posen has a fantastic exuberance, and Jess Holzworth has a downtown sensibility that's edgy, but she's an original. The flip side to that was the return to wonderful elegance from designers like Ralph [Lauren] and Narciso [Rodriguez]. We're going to sell the hell out of Michael Kors.

"I think people will respond to clothes that look like they have a history to them. People need to make an instant emotional attachment to clothes. One of the highlights of the week for me was Rick Owens. He has this slightly punk, slightly gothic, Hollywood-L.A. sensibility, and he has an amazing ability to fit clothes to the body. The other highlight was the return of Stephen Burrows, who used all this bright, beautiful color for sensual, confident clothes. He feels very relevant again. He designed through the seventies and the eighties before bailing out because of bad business advice. It felt like good karma to have him back."

BEHNAZ SARAFPOUR, designer: "I just wanted a very soft, dreamy, romantic look that had a bit of history to it that went with the poetry that I was reading, mostly poems from the 1800s. The main poets that I was interested in have their poems on the pieces. The Emily Dickinson suit is about hope, the Herman Melville long blue dress is about creation of art, and there are two Byron poems on a short, gray georgette dress—they're embroidered on the hems."

OSCAR DE LA RENTA, designer: "Now is not the time to tell the women of New York that they should go out and buy a sweater and skirt. For me, this is exactly the time that people have to dream and fall in love with clothes, that they can lift your morale."

LINDA WELLS, editor, *Allure*: "My feeling is that the clothes have to hit you in the gut, that they have to be so desirable you want to say, 'To hell with the bills.' At Ralph Lauren there was a black denim coat and a black denim jacket that I thought were great; a black shearling vest at Calvin; the leather bomber jacket that opened the show at Balenciaga; and *every* single coat at Michael Kors. This season, you could go naked and just wear all of the new coats that are out there. I liked the way that there was a feeling of things being a little rough around the edges, that it wasn't about 'I'm dressing up.'"

"I was perfectly happy not to hear live bands on the runway, and there were fewer celebrities and that's just fine. I also thought the lack of elevated runways in fa-

vor of seeing everything at ground level was interesting; the message seemed to be that fashion wasn't being put on a pedestal."

KENNETH COLE, designer: "Last season was our biggest and grandest show to date. This season, it just felt right to bring the show into my office and have the editors enjoy the peaceful and comfortable setting. It is important to convey the message that we need to feel better about ourselves, take care of ourselves, and that it is okay to want to look and feel good."

KAL RUTTENSTEIN, retailer, Bloomingdale's: "Black was the biggest trend. But layering was big, too; there was more of a feeling of generosity of cut and fabrics, expressed best at Narciso Rodriguez—clothes that skimmed the body, that didn't hug it."

RALPH LAUREN, designer: "Excess is gone. The show has become more about the integrity of the clothes and the environment and less about the spectacle. Consumers want sophisticated clothing that is rich in quality and individuality. It's about finding that perfect precious piece. What I really wanted to do was to make clothes that inspired people to dream a little."

ANNA CRYER, executive fashion editor, *British Vogue*: "The big American designers, Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, and Ralph Lauren, do what they do so well. And this season, you felt that a lot of them were retrenching, doing what they normally do, but better. And Michael Kors was so slick and polished and confident."

NARCISO RODRIGUEZ, designer: "I can't remember a season that I enjoyed more. I just wanted to do something really good. Good details and good fabrics and honest and straightforward clothes. I wanted to bring some joy back to the art of dress-making. My happiness and my joy at being in New York is really what the collection is about."

ROBERT BURKE, retailer, Bergdorf Goodman: "The difference from a year or two ago is so marked. Then, everyone bought the same things and carried the same bag, and somehow it didn't seem to matter. For fall, I think people will want things that perhaps feel a little more Bohemian, less contrived and costumey. I was also interested in the way that eveningwear has evolved from something that was all about big-occasion dressing into something a bit more casual, as if designers were responding to people's staying at home more."

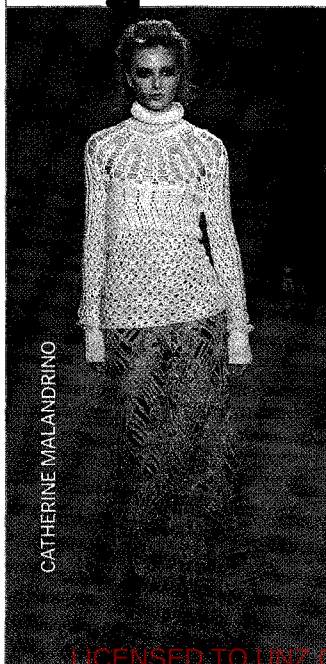
LENGTH WISE

If the sight of skirts with hems skimming the sidewalk makes you sigh, take heart: There was a smattering of mini and knee-length skirts on the runways. But the news here is *long*. Skirts are a major component of the move toward layering: Add a coat or jacket, a vest, a roll-neck sweater, and boots, and you're good to go. What to buy: Longer, fuller skirts are the linchpin of fall's rich-folk look. Seek out those that are in some way decorative: patchworked, embroidered, or loaded with lace, velvet, or a flash of sparkle.

MATTHEW WILLIAMSON



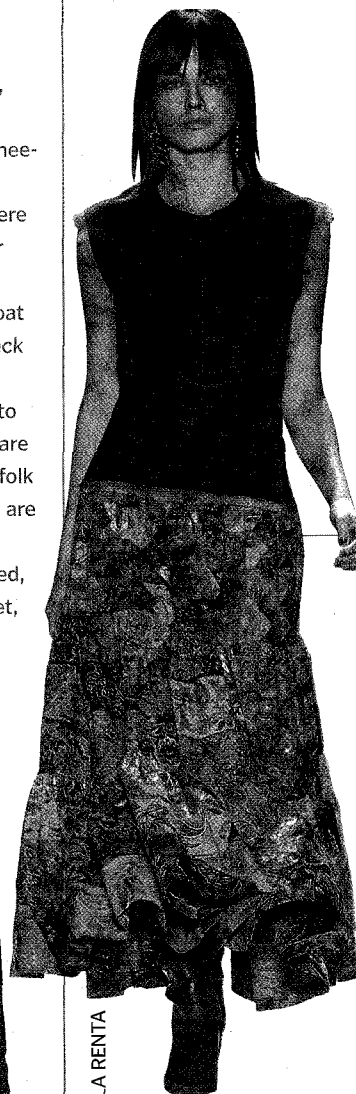
ANNA SUI



CATHERINE MALANDRINO



MARC JACOBS



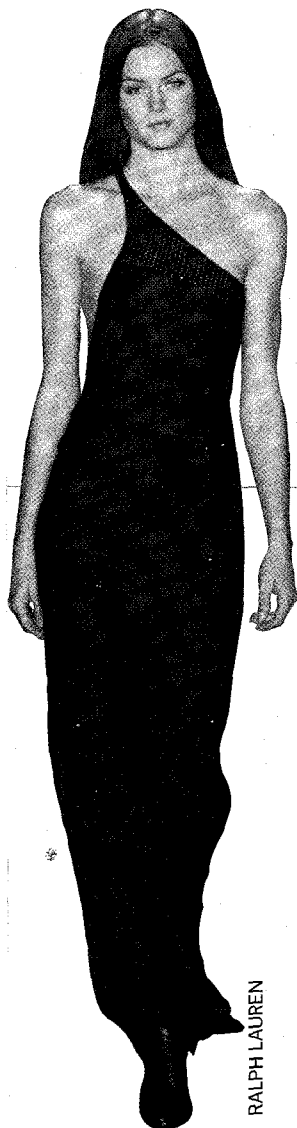
OSCAR DE LA RENTA



CYNTHIA ROWLEY

NIGHT MOVES>

So now you're entertaining at home in a sweater and skirt? Well, what happens when you want to dress up? Call it brave-faced optimism, but New York's finest sent out some of the best after-dark, big-band dressing in years—tempered with only a little realism by keeping it black and pretty simple. What to buy: anything with a nostalgic whiff of bygone Gotham glamour—thirties- and forties-inspired column or bias-cut dresses. And don't worry: There's almost no ornamentation. That comes from the luscious mix of fabrics, juxtaposing, say, chiffon with velvet.



RALPH LAUREN

CALVIN KLEIN



NARCISO RODRIGUEZ



DONNA KARAN



RICK OWENS



CAROLINA HERRERA

LARS NILSSON, designer, Bill Blass: "Clothes should have a warmth; they should be comfortable. In these times, people need to feel good in what they're wearing. I did a lot of knits and cozy sweaters, scarves and cashmere and warm things. Even in the colors, I went warm, with reds and eggplants."

CAROLINA HERRERA, designer: "I showed in my office this time, and what I showed was the key item for this season: the three-piece suit. Trousers, jacket, blouse. This season, this is the best. This is what you need to have. I find it very snappy and chic."

NICOLAS GHESQUIÈRE, designer, Balenciaga: "My collection was about the meeting point between the sharp and structured silhouette from last fall and the loose unconstructed silhouette from the current spring-summer. My five main inspirations were aviator jackets, the oversized sixties silhouette, traditional British fabrics like tweed, graphic color-blocked jockey shirts, and yetis—fur without fur."

BENJAMIN CHO, designer: "I've definitely come back in with a calmer perspective—I had time to breathe, and I just understand that I enjoy doing this, making clothes, nothing else. This season, I felt less like making things commercial. That's not my point right now. I don't mind living cheap and doing this as long as I can make things that I really believe in. If I'm working on a budget, I just have to think: *Do I want to make wearable pants or buy ribbons for this conceptual top that I'm completely excited to try?* The conceptual always wins."

NICOLE NOSELLI, co-designer, Bruce: "This season, we were trying to loosen up our shapes a little. We've always been into long, structured shapes, and we wanted to move on to something else. We're trying to do a lot of layering and draping. The idea was that if wind hits the garments, they'd create a lot of volume."

"Last season was such a strange time, but in the end, it didn't change anything. This is what we do, and now we're doing it again."

RICK OWENS, designer: "My word is *soft*. The cashmeres are soft, the knits are soft. Even the leathers are soft."

DIANE VON FURSTENBERG, designer: "We all feel a little more vulnerable, but a little kinder and a little more humble. What I wanted to do was somehow celebrate New York. That's why I called it 'Crosstown Traffic'—it's because New York is the crosstown of the world, it's where every-

one comes to sell their wares, it's where dreams turn into action. I don't really do advertising, so showing is a way of conveying the image and conveying the mood and a certain spirit and a certain attitude. You go back and forth and say shows are ridiculous, but at the end you see gorgeous girls wearing the clothes, bringing them to life."

CYNTHIA ROWLEY, designer: "I always used to say, 'A show should be a show! It's entertainment!' But not anymore. I wanted a really simple runway. I've been having a lot of people over to my apartment. It changes everything when you start doing that: You have a totally different attitude about what you're wearing. It can be hot or cold, and it doesn't matter. I showed a lot of skimpy, bare, nightie things that are meant to have a big coat thrown over them if you're going outside, but they're the most comfortable thing to have on in the most protective environment."

SARAH HAILES AND BETH BUCCINI, owners, Kirna Zabête: "We loved the mini at Balenciaga. That's going to be a very important silhouette for us, with the oversize top. We also loved the tough leather jackets with high necks. There's definitely a neck thing going on—big, high, thick, thick necks. But if there's one thing that bridges the season, it's the hippie thing. I'd say folkloric is the theme that will bridge spring into winter."

ANNA SUI, designer: "I wanted to project optimism. I wanted to make the sort of clothes that should be keepsakes. I wanted to make the most beautiful peasant shirt, the one you dream of finding, in the colors that you dream of. We all have to show our support in our own way, and this is what I do. I wanted to make this the most exciting show I ever did."

SIMON DOONAN, retailer, Barneys: "I'm always looking at the clothes and saying, 'Is this going to improve anyone's life?' And with Michael Kors, the answer was yes. And the same thing with Narciso and Ralph. There was an optimism about it. And yet it was very chic and wearable. Narciso was a bit more kinky, but the execution was great. I hate a dangling thread, so I tend to gravitate towards the things that are beautifully made."

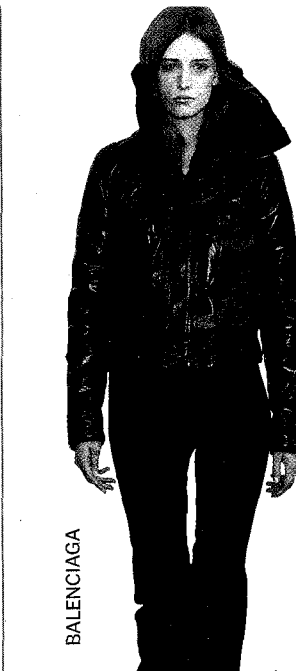
"There's something innately mod about Michael and Ralph that appeals to me. I like sportswear, and I like it to be beautifully executed. If I want to see the avant-garde, I'm going to look at Rei Kawakubo. But I love sportswear, and that's what New York is all about."



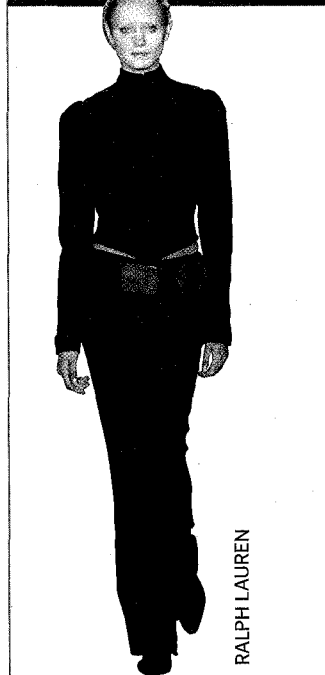
HUGO BOSS



RICK OWENS



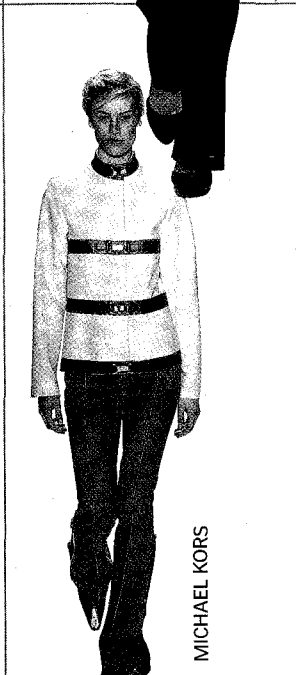
BALENCIAGA



RALPH LAUREN

SCALE FACTOR>

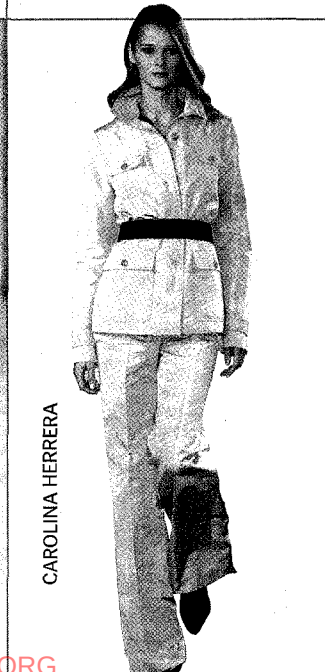
The operative word for fall jackets? Small. All that tailoring expertise has gone into making them as sleek and as slim as possible. The newest shape has a narrow shoulder and finishes somewhere around the waist. (Though there is also a smattering of safari-inspired jackets with copious pockets and cinched waists.) What to buy: Look for bomber or battle jackets that sit close to the body, in wool, suede, or washed or distressed leather.



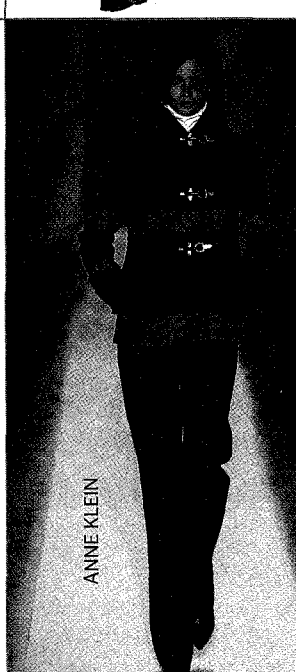
MICHAEL KORS



LUELLA



CAROLINA HERRERA



ANNE KLEIN

BestBets

PRIMA SUQI

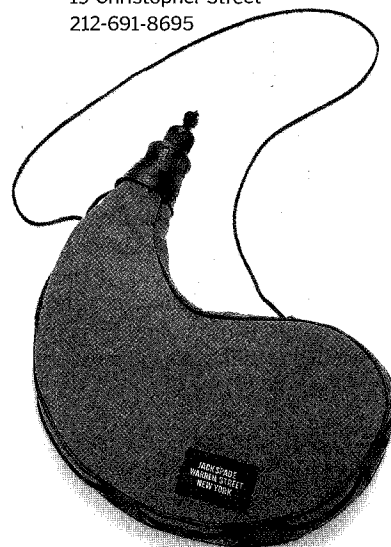
Vintage Vinyl Industrial designer Jeff Davis could be considered a conservationist. Rather than letting scratched, warped, or otherwise unplayable LPs head for the trash, he rescues them and hand-forms them into bowls. One type looks like a Devo-style helmet hat, the other is smooth. Artists range from Barbra Streisand to Led Zeppelin, Kool & the Gang, and even Andy Gibb (\$35).

► **MXYPZYK**
125 Greenwich Avenue/212-989-4300



Mat Class There's something fun underfoot. These new doormats are made of coir (the husk of the coconut) and hand-painted in India with groovy designs. They're also fully biodegradable (\$28).

► **AMALGAMATED HOME**
19 Christopher Street
212-691-8695



Drink to This Flasks are fine to stash in spiffy sport coats, but they're a bit stiff for casual occasions. Instead, try Jack Spade's new Boda bag, made of waxwear canvas (like mackintosh raincoats) (\$50).

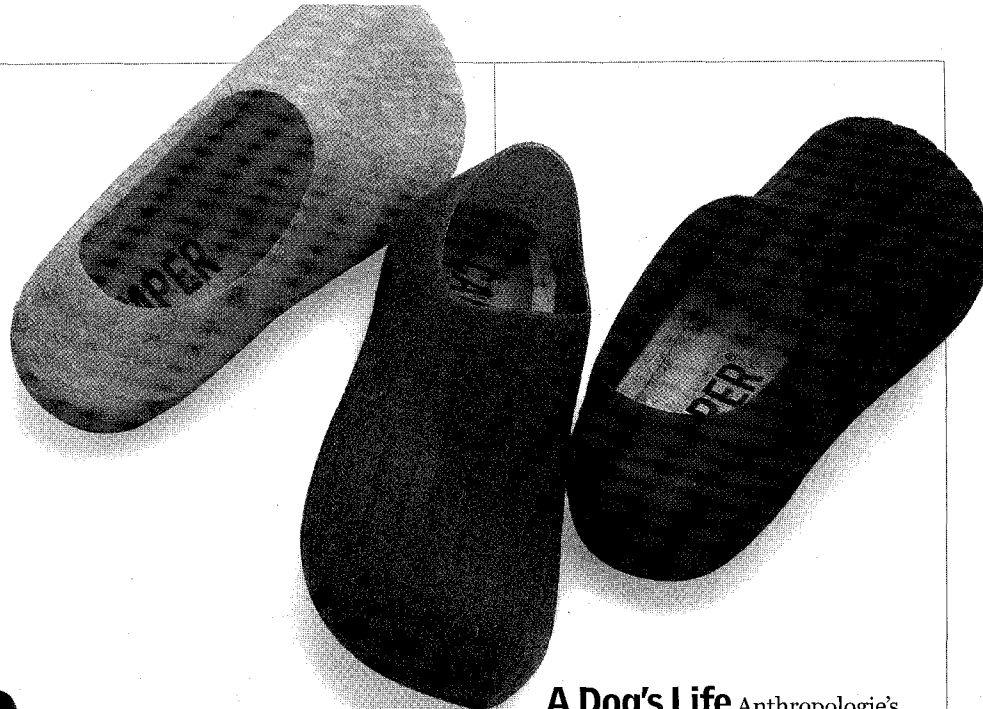
► **JACK SPADE**
56 Greene Street/212-625-1820

Nature Walk

Camper's "Wabi" shoe is cute and politically correct. The 100 percent recyclable style is made of rubber that's perforated to minimize sweating and has a removable coconut-fiber insole. Available in blue, orange, yellow, and green. Men's and women's sizes (\$140).

► **CAMPER**

125 Prince Street/212-358-1842



Toy Story It's like getting a toy with your tee: Each of Solix's shirts features a vinyl bug, reptile, or ocean creature right in the center. Styles include T-shirts, tank tops, and baseball shirts. All are machine-washable and -dryable and come in both kid (at Space Kiddets) and adult (through the Website) sizes (\$28).

► **SPACE KIDDETS**

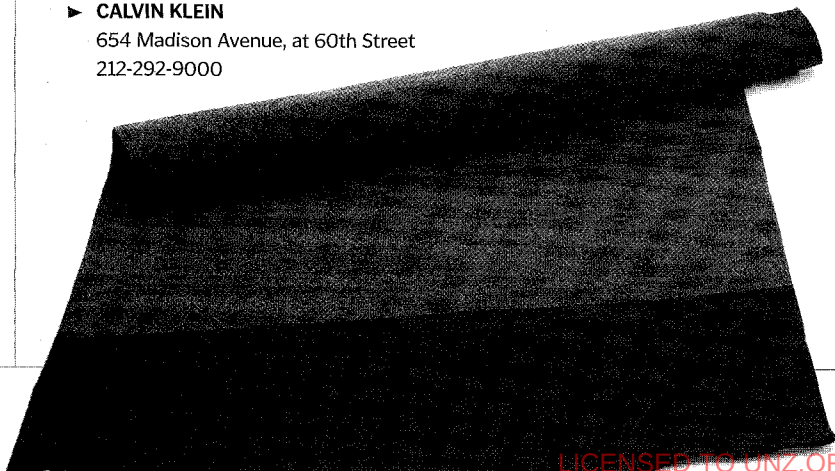
46 East 21st Street/212-614-3235
www.bugst.com

Magical Carpets

Calvin Klein's new rugs are exactly what you'd expect: simple, geometric designs in beautiful color combinations. There are five grades, ranging in price from handwoven flat-weave styles (\$295 to \$1,450) to Tibetan-weave wool and silk ones (\$1,300 to \$10,800). Each comes in four to eight patterns. Shown here, Sienna Bands flat-weave.

► **CALVIN KLEIN**

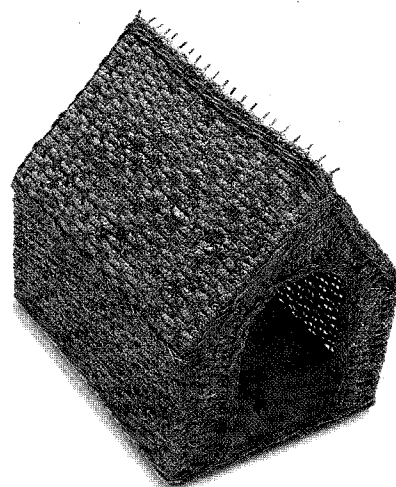
654 Madison Avenue, at 60th Street
212-292-9000



A Dog's Life Anthropologie's new Lucky-Dog house is like a summer shack for your schnauzer (or any dog that size). Made of rattan and pine, the chic shelter is meant for indoor use but can be left outdoors in good weather. Dog bed not included (\$140).

► **ANTHROPOLOGIE**

375 West Broadway/212-343-7070
85 Fifth Avenue, at 16th Street
212-627-5885
www.anthropologie.com



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Get on the Case

W Quit drooling over designer pooch carriers. These cost a fraction of the price and will keep you—and your pup—in the style to which you're accustomed.

WHEN MOST PEOPLE meet Kiddo, my seven-month-old, eight-pound Yorkshire terrier, they're

quick to comment on how easy it must be to just throw him in a bag and tote him around town. True enough, but who knew there were so many dog carriers to choose from?

For simply strolling through town with the pooch, look for New York Dog's new line, **Manhattan Mutts**, which will hit stores in the spring (if you need a fix earlier, try New York Dog's sample sale; 646-486-1331). The bags are small enough to throw over a shoulder and soft like a plush—dare I say it?—stuffed animal (\$30 at Z-Spot). Your dog may not have been part of the World Trade Center canine search-and-rescue team, but he can show off his patriotic pride with **Animal Wrappers'** good ol' fashioned denim tote emblazoned with an American flag (\$75 at Doggie-Do and Pussycats, Too!).

If you're thinking of bringing your pooch on a plane, you'll need a sturdy, airline-approved bag. **Pet Portage's** silver-and-black one is great—and it looks so much like a gym bag that you can use it to sneak your four-legged friend into a movie theater or restaurant (\$60 at Fetch). Looking for something that will carry

your dog and a whole lot more? **Celltei's** carriers feature several compartments, including a pocket for your cell phone (\$155 at the Four Paws Club) and detachable straps to turn it into a backpack. Celltei even offers a line of smaller bags for teacup breeds.

MARC S. MALKIN

Z-Spot, 965 Madison Ave. (212-472-4960); Doggie-Do and Pussycats, Too!, 567 Third Ave., near 38th St. (212-661-9111); Fetch, 43 Greenwich Ave. (212-352-8591); the Four Paws Club, 387 Bleecker St. (212-367-8265).

Picks of the Week

Peacock Alley's taking 20 to 50 percent off loads of sheets, pillows, and other bedding (mostly \$60 to \$163). 334 E. 59th St. (212-751-7005); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-4; 2/25-3/8.

Cousin Claudine's crystal- and semi-precious-stone-encrusted jewelry (seen at Bendel) is up to 75 percent off (\$2 to \$60). 505 Park Ave., near 59th St., fourth floor (212-446-6171); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Thurs. 8-6:30; 2/26-2/28.

Naked Eye is taking 10 to 30 percent off sunglass and eyeglass frames (\$105 to \$350). 192 Orchard St. (212-253-4935); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sat. 1-9, Sun. 1-5; 2/25-3/20.

Tardini's classic accessories for men and women (belts, bags, shoes) are 70 per-

DOG SHOW: From left, carriers by Manhattan Mutts, Celltei, Animal Wrappers, Pet Portage, and Celltei.

cent off (\$30 to \$790). 12 W. 57th St., fourth floor (212-253-7692); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Sat. 10-6; 2/25-3/2.

Lexington Formalwear is clearing new and used men's formalwear and accessories at 40 to 60 percent off (\$69 to \$375). 12 E. 46th St., second floor (212-867-4420); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Wed. 9-5:30, Thurs.-Fri. 9-6:30, Sat. 10-5; 3/1-3/23.

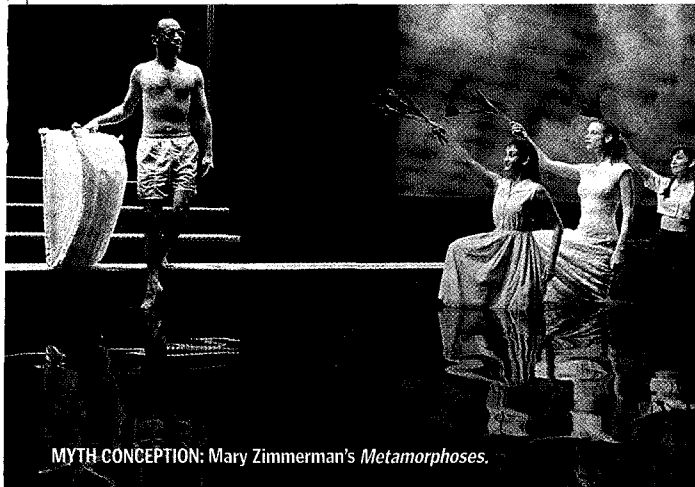
Bergdorf Goodman's bridal sample sale means 50 to 75 percent off top-end gowns (\$200 to \$5,000). Mostly sizes 8 to 10, some larger. Fifth Ave. at 57th St. (212-872-8957); A.E., M.C., V.; 2/25-3/2.

The Bridal Garden takes donations from high-end designers and sells them to benefit a kids' charity. Now they're taking 70 to 80 percent off most stock (\$395 to \$2,000). 122 E. 29th St. (212-252-0661); M.C., V.; by appointment only; 2/26-3/23.

 Sign up for the Best Bets Daily Newsletter at nymetro.com/newsletters. Every Monday through Friday, we'll e-mail you a new "Best Bet" and a "Sales & Bargains" update. While you're there, search our online guide to more than 1,500 of New York's best shops.

CUTE

A WEEKLY GUIDE TO CULTURE AND UPCOMING EVENTS • Edited by Christopher Bonanos



MYTH CONCEPTION: Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses*.

THEATER

Metamorphoses

Swim, O Muse! Mary Zimmerman's elegant retelling of the myths of Ovid moves from Second Stage to Circle in the Square. An ensemble cast plays the familiar characters of Midas, Narcissus, and Orpheus—but in an unfamiliar setting: The stage has been transformed into a 27-foot pool. (In previews for a March 4 opening; see listing, page 70.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Coffee Cantata

Little-known fact: In 1732, German authorities tried to prohibit women from drinking coffee. In response, Bach wrote a sweet, funny cantata about a father who'll stop at nothing to see that his daughter is decaffeinated. The rarely performed work comes to the stage as part of St. Bartholomew's Great Music Series. (February 28; see listing, page 89.)

COMEDY

Stand Up for Madeline and OCRF

Nathan Lane and Robert Klein host this benefit for the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund, subtitled "An Evening of Laughter in Tribute to Madeline Kahn." Guests including Rosie O'Donnell and Joy Behar will pay their respects—humorously, of course—to the divinely hilarious actress who died of ovarian cancer in 1999. (February 25; see listing, page 90.)

BOOKS

Girls' Poker Night

Skip the overrated *Me Times Three* in favor of this playful novel by former *Late Show* writer Jill A. Davis. Her main character—the writer of a single-girl-in-the-city newspaper column—is surrounded by loony friends, unfortunate relationships, and a regular poker game that binds it all together. (Random House, \$23.95; in bookstores now. Davis will

read at the Astor Place Barnes & Noble on February 28; see listing, page 93.)

MOVIES

We Were Soldiers

The cinematic equivalent of 50 American flags flying from a pickup truck, this based-on-actual-events war melodrama stars Mel Gibson as Lieutenant Colonel Harold G. Moore, who led 400 young troops into the first major battle between North Vietnam and the United States. (Opens March 1; see listing, page 62.)

RESTAURANTS

Great Sommeliers and Chefs de Cuisine

Reserve in advance for this five-course gala dinner and auction, brought to you by the American Institute of Wine & Food. Chefs from the likes of Tribeca Grill, Craft, and Picholine are in charge of the food; top sommeliers will auction their favorite wines. Eat, drink, and don't plan anything really challenging for the next morning. (March 4; for reservations, call 212-447-0456.)

ART

Latin American Fashion

An ambitious exhibition in four parts—surveying Latin American influence in fashion—includes a vast array of garments from the likes of Carolina Herrera and Oscar de la Renta. Expect a fringed shawl or two. (Opens March 5; see listing, page 89.)

LATIN GLOVERS: A 1959 dress by Luis Estevez, at FIT.

TOP five

Screen Gems

The better the movie, the more painful it is to see it in a shoebox. Here are five of the largest, plushiest houses in town—for brighter explosions, bigger heroes, and an enveloping experience. Visit one this weekend, or save our list for summer-blockbuster season.

1. Loews Imax

You know it for pop-science spectacles, but the 108-foot screen also hosts outsize prints of new releases. Recent visitors include *Harry Potter* and *Lord of the Rings*; right now, it's the special edition of *Beauty and the Beast*. (1998 Broadway, at 68th Street, 212-50-LOEWS#638.)

2. Clearview's Ziegfeld

Over a thousand seats and a 52-foot screen make it *the* spot for red-carpet premieres. If you want to see an event film here, though, plan ahead—this is where the *Star Wars* nuts camp out. (141 West 54th Street; 212-777-FILM#602. Now showing: 'Return to Neverland'.)

3. Sunshine Cinema

The Lower East Side's gorgeous new cinema, in an old vaudeville house, has five screens, the largest of which evokes the old days. But it's all twenty-first-century tech, with stadium seating and Dolby EX. (143 East Houston Street; 212-358-7709. Now showing in the big theater: 'Monsoon Wedding'.)

4. BAM Rose Cinemas

Best for festivals and its Q&A's with Brooklyn filmmakers like Darren Aronofsky and Steve Buscemi, the Beaux-Arts landmark has a good restaurant and bar upstairs, too. (30 Lafayette Avenue; 718-636-4100. See "Museums, Societies, Etc.," page 66, for listings.)

5. Paris Theatre

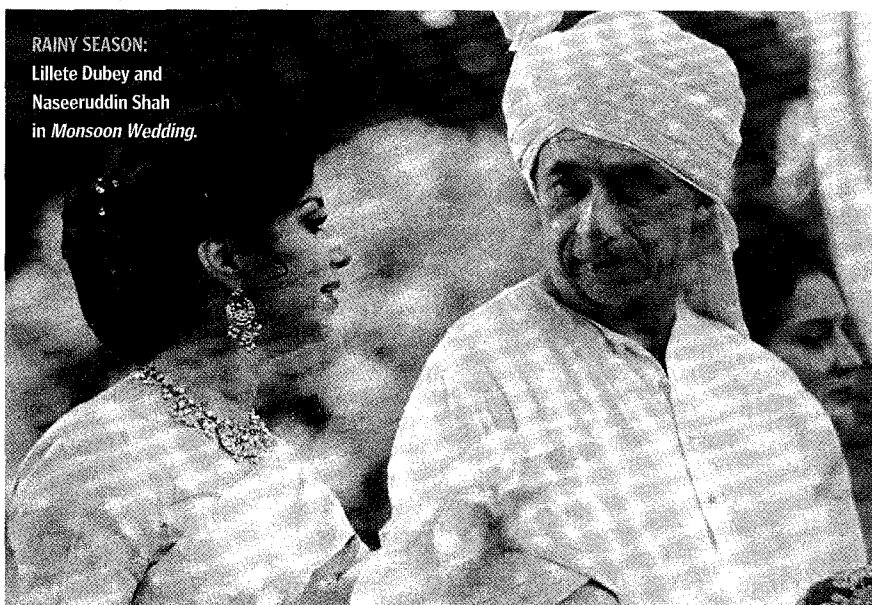
One of the last New York theaters with a proper balcony, the Paris focuses on imports. After many months of *Amélie*, this week it's *Monsoon Wedding* (see review, page 50). (4 West 58th Street; 212-688-3800.) BEN KAPLAN

Hooray for Bollywood!

Monsoon Wedding is an exhilarating pastiche of Bombay musicals and Hollywood humor; *Big Bad Love* offers a Debra Winger comeback but little else to cheer about.

Monsoon Wedding IS almost giddy with good feelings. Director Mira Nair grew up in India but has spent much of her creative life in America, and she promiscuously combines authentic observations of Punjabi mores with melodrama that's pure Hollywood. The action centers on the preparations for a lavish arranged marriage in New Delhi, and the interweaving family subplots and madcap scenes featuring the flibbertigibbet caterer, or the exasperated dad, are meant to evoke not only whirligig Bombay movie-musical romances but also films like *Father of the Bride*. Sabrina Dhawan, who wrote the screenplay and was Nair's teaching assistant in Columbia's graduate film program, provides the rich pop textures that, along with Declan Quinn's cinematography, give the movie its hallucinatory shimmer. The Indian culture being celebrated is a swirl of Western and Eastern, old and new, pre- and postcolonial, and so the film's pastiche quality makes emotional sense; the friends and family, who speak a mixture of Hindi, Punjabi, and English, are often quite conscious that they're living out an ancient soap opera that draws on both Hollywood and Bollywood. Kitsch knows no borders.

Aditi (Indian pop star Vasundhara Das) is the restless, moody daughter at the center of the swirl. Her upper-middle-class father, Lalit (Naseeruddin Shah), and mother, Pimmi (Lillete Dubey), are sparing no expense for the wedding, but unbeknownst to them, Aditi's heart belongs not to her betrothed (Parvin Dabas), an intelligent, straitlaced engineer based in Houston, but to her ex-boss, a crumbum TV host twice her age. If this standard-issue plotline isn't to your taste, rest assured another one—or three—is always in the offing. Cousins arrive toting



RAINY SEASON:
Lillete Dubey and
Naseeruddin Shah
in *Monsoon Wedding*.

deep, dark family secrets; the monsoon season threatens to wash out the wedding. The freshest subplot involves rail-thin catering contractor P. K. Dubey (Vijay Raaz) and the shy family servant Alice (Tilotama Shome), who overturns his confirmed bachelorhood. These two have a moonstruck quality right out of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: He's so smitten by her maidenly reticence that he goes rubbery in the legs and chomps marigolds. (Raaz may be the gangliest physical comic since Jim Carrey.) When Dubey and Alice are together, the movie reaches beyond pop exuberance and becomes pop poetry.

Mira Nair began her career with a number of extraordinary documentaries, and her searing first feature, *Salaam Bombay!*, was highly successful in blending made-up drama with caught-in-the-streets realism. Her subsequent movies—*Mississippi Masala*, *The Perez Family*, and *Kama Sutra*—have been rather lush and mushy. Nair has a greater affinity for Bollywood and its Busby Besekeley musicals

than perhaps she was ready to admit—until now. One reason *Monsoon Wedding*, which was shot cheaply and quickly in super-16-mm., is more successful than those earlier films is that this time around, she fully gives in to the nuttiness. Occasionally, *Monsoon Wedding* threatens to become one of those movies that look like they were more fun to make than they are to sit through, but mostly it's an effective jamboree. Nair is a rarity: a trenchant documentarian who also has a gift for silliness. When a story line or character in *Monsoon Wedding* starts to sag, Nair simply sets the cast to dancing until something more interesting gusts along. And when there's nothing much to look at—which, given the bright array of faces and saris and wedding outfits, isn't often—the soundtrack is an exhilarating concoction of folk, jazz, and Indian pop. *Monsoon Wedding* is eminently disposable, but that's its charm. It stays with you just long enough to make you smile.

THE ONLY REASON TO CHECK OUT **Big Bad Love** is Debra Winger, last seen onscreen in 1995. Winger famously walked away

Monsoon Wedding

Directed by Mira Nair;
starring Vasundhara Das
and Parvin Dabas.

Big Bad Love

Directed by Arliss Howard;
starring Arliss Howard
and Debra Winger.
See Movies listings
for details.

from the movie business, and one can only hope she is currently contemplating walking back. But this movie, for those few who see it, won't exactly have people clamoring for her next one. Directed by and starring Arliss Howard, Winger's husband, as struggling Mississippi writer Leon Barlow, it's a slow slog through the perfervid consciousness of a self-destructive artist—a southern-fried cross between *Pollock* and the Charles Bukowski booze-a-thon *Barfly*, although not nearly as strong as either. Larry Brown's story collection *Big Bad Love* is the basis for a string of alcoholic jags intended to mimic the writer's sordid life, but the only cosmic question that arises from watching this film is, why should we care about any of these people?

We should care about Winger, though. As Leon's estranged wife, she brings the movie its only whiff of genuine emotion. It's a small role, and we hang on to everything she does because who knows when we'll get another chance? Winger remains one of the most intensely naturalistic actresses ever to grace the screen; her presence is a guarantor of dramatic truth. And her smoky voice, which can be both edgy and easeful, is one of the great acting instruments.

Plenty of big stars should go into premature retirement, but Winger's voluntary separation from movies, whatever personal reasons may have been behind it, never made any sense *artistically*. After all, despite her public drubbing of the state of movies, she had three of her best roles—in *Everybody Wins* and *Shadowlands* and *A Dangerous Woman*—not long before she quit. It's true that the movies of the past decade haven't, for the most part, been equal to her. But *some* were. And surely there are directors and writers and producers who would have gloried in the opportunity to create roles especially for her. (Imagine what, say, Kenneth Lonergan could cook up.)

Winger's reappearance comes at a time when most actresses her age are relegated to motherly supporting parts. If ever there was a woman who could break this mold, it's her. I would guess that even the new crop of whippersnapper directors who were being burped in high chairs when she made *An Officer and a Gentleman* or *Terms of Endearment* or *Mike's Murder* would be delirious to have her as their muse. Winger's disappearing act was itself a moment of high drama. It's time to put that drama back on the screen. ■



Peter Rainer's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/rainer.

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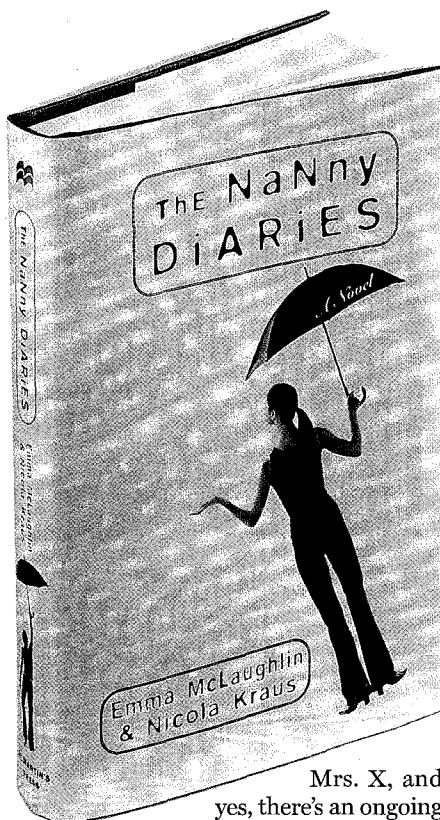
Nanny Cam

Park Avenue mommies like to keep an eye on their children's keepers. But a new novel shows that the nannies are just as likely to be the ones taking notes.

The *Nanny Diaries*, EMMA McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus's gimlet-eyed novel of dysfunction in the 10028 Zip Code, begins with what you fervently hope is a big fat lie: a "Note to Readers" insisting that while the authors worked as nannies for a total of more than 30 New York City families, the "characters are the product of the authors' imagination." Damn. The whole point of reading a book like this is to get the dirt on real people—in this case, the kind of really rich people who make you glad you don't have a billion in the bank; and I, for one, would be inconsolable to find that the crack-addicted ex-beauty queen who has frosting fights with her 4-year-old in a vast East Sixties townhouse, or the Park Avenue fortysomething who alphabetizes her panties by designer, turned out to be products of anyone's imagination.

Anyway, could anyone really dream this stuff up? I don't mean the plot: This one—about a nice middle-class girl who goes to work for a seriously rich, seriously wretched family from whom she takes a lot of abuse until a liberating showdown—has worked like a charm in everything from *Jane Eyre* to *The Sound of Music*. Here, our heroine (inevitably named Nanny) is an NYU child-psych major who takes what she thinks is a part-time job looking after 4-year-old Grayer X (yes, that's the surname) of 721 Park Avenue, only to find herself reduced to serfdom by her trophy-wife employer, who's too busy with pedicures and "committee work" to make contact with her own child. Or, for that matter, with anyone else: She communicates with Nanny by means of exquisitely calligraphed—and exquisitely passive aggressive—notes. ("I was wondering if you could throw something together for Grayer's dinner, since I won't be home till eight. He loves Coquilles St. Jacques...")

But Nanny's story isn't the point here. Yes, there's the escalating conflict with



Mrs. X, and yes, there's an ongoing flirtation with a nice boy in the Xes' building, and Nanny's lurching progress toward graduation, to give the novel forward momentum. (That there's momentum at all is a nice bonus: There is more writerly flair here than either the double authorship or the predictable setup would lead you to expect.)

But the wicked fascination of this novel lies in all the wacky tidbits about life in the social stratosphere—people for whom a summer in Nantucket rather than the Hamptons is a bold step in the direction of "diversity." The "impromptu" barbecues featuring watermelons sculpted into busts of former presidents; the highly paid "problem consultants" whom attenuated matrons must hire in order to fire their underpaid help; the Park Avenue ladies who buy studios in the same buildings as their fifteen-room duplexes so they can have "someplace

for a little private time" away from little Darwin or Iolanthe—this kind of folly is irresistible to read about.

It's worth wondering why. If "backstairs" literature—the butler's or cook's or governess's eyes-to-the-keyhole account of how their rich or famous employers live—has always been popular, it's because it serves a crucial cultural purpose: not to sell us on the haute life but, if anything, to reassure the middle classes that the best possible thing is to be middle-class. Forget about "Let them eat cake": Books like *The Nanny Diaries* allow us to eat our cake and have it, too—to ogle the designer-decorated Christmas trees, the private planes, the lazy days of cappuccinos and seaweed wraps, even as we sneer at the (clichéd) inability to have warm, loving family lives. Mrs. X may have a dressing room the size of your apartment, but philandering Papa X rarely makes it home from the office. Both parents make Medea look like Mary Poppins: The attention-starved Grayer pathetically carries around his dad's tattered business card like a totem.

I couldn't help thinking that Grayer's been neglected by his creators too. It's strange, given the amount of time the authors have spent around kids, that they haven't managed to conjure a memorable child character. This boy is sort of generically endearing—he cries and snuggles and sleeps on cue—but although you're constantly told that Nanny's love for the boy is what keeps her from quitting, you never really feel it. Of course, children aren't really the point here. They are, if anything, just as much an "accessory" to the authors as they are to the emotionally frozen parents, whose overdecorated, undernourished lives are the real object of a satire whose barbs are sharp but don't go all that deep. "I'm distracted from my thoughts of the Xes by the trappings of the Xes," Nanny hopelessly realizes in the final pages of this very funny book. So, it would seem, are the authors; so—deliciously—are you. ■

The Nanny Diaries

By Emma McLaughlin
and Nicola Kraus.
St. Martin's Press;
320 pages; \$24.95.



Daniel Mendelsohn's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/mendelsohn.

A Night at Elaine's

Elaine Stritch serves up her flawless solo dish on Broadway; and while *Four* may be only so-so as drama, it provides a showcase for a quartet of fine actors.

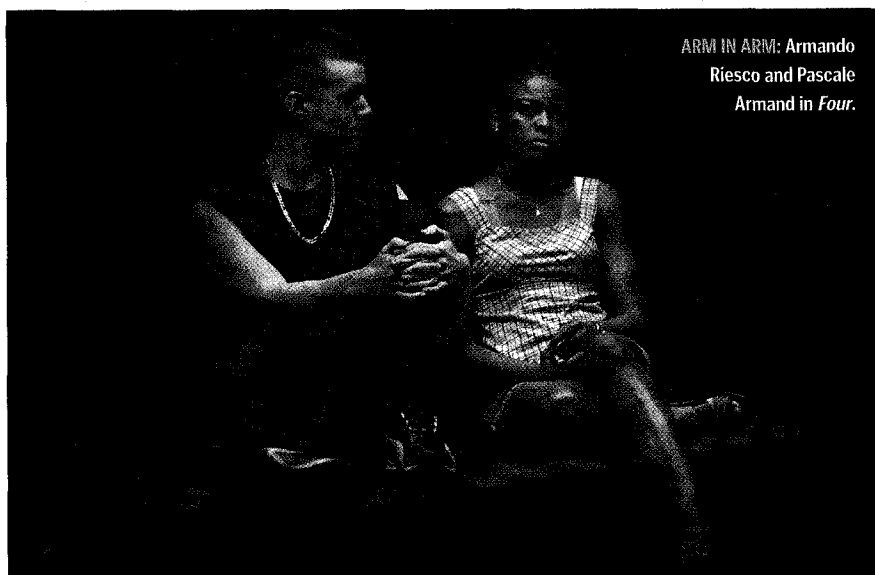
TRUE STYLE IS THE SEAMLESS blend of the natural and the artful, which is what Elaine Stritch, with a constructional assist from John Lahr and a directorial one from George C. Wolfe, consummately delivers in *Elaine*

Stritch at Liberty. Here the persons unseen are as present as the one seen, and the protagonist's life, onstage and off, proves rich enough in adventure and misadventure, achievement and setback, fallibility and triumph, to fill the biggest stage, fulfill the most exacting expectations.

First, there is the cogent fusion of narration and song. Stritch's storytelling and singing are not separate entities; they flow into each other almost imperceptibly. The blend is possible because, by her merrily mercurial delivery, Stritch can make speech sing, just as her speechlike naturalness in singing makes song feel like self-baring conversation. It is all varicolored wool melding into a single tapestry.

Next, the mastery of emphasis, rhythm, and pause. Stritch can wax almost grotesquely histrionic, yet carry it off with conspiratorial facial play, infectious body language. Hyperbole becomes not hamming but metaphor. Sudden changes—from loud to soft, lento to presto, or vice versa—keep us on our toes, increasingly aware that the tempo is the message, that acceleration and retardation are the music of living. And those pauses that might give Pinter envious pause are the interstices wherein thought can catch up with the meaning of action.

Finally, there is that barstool, the show's sole prop, enhancing the speaker's eloquence. Confidently perching or restoratively leaning on it, emphatically plunking it down or cannily relocating it, blithely ignoring it or stymiedly crumpling up over it, Stritch makes the high chair embody moods, objectify states of being. Everything here is



ARM IN ARM: Armando Riesco and Pascale Armand in *Four*.

finely conceived, calibrated, communicated. It is in this net of calculation that truth is captured, even as the crafty machinations of the camera yield, in the right hands, the unarguable spontaneity of the snapshot.

MISUNDERSTOOD WHITE BOY, 16, IS GROWING up gay. (That his parents named him June helps.) Abigayle, 16, neglected black girl (mother permanent invalid, father mostly absent), is growing up promiscuous. June picks up a much older mate, Joe, via e-mail. Abigayle reluctantly goes on a date with Dexter, a half-white, half-Hispanic boy she doesn't like. It is the Fourth of July and anything can happen, even in Hartford.

Instead, whatever happens in Christopher Shinn's *Four* is humdrum. The dubious points of interest are that the couples are interracial, that one of them is homosexual, and that Joe is Abigayle's father. Both couples have sex. In the end, June and Abigayle stand alone, forlornly gazing at a sky where the budget does not seem to allow for a fireworks display.

Although sexual acts are suggested, we get only a couple of quasi-daring moments. The boldest thing here is that in both cases intercourse is initiated by the less likely partner—June or Abigayle—and that the theoretical aggressor is somewhat (Joe) or very much (Dexter) taken aback. Even so, all this is tame stuff, and though tame is not bad, trivial is.

Jeff Cohen, the director, has taken minor liberties. The text calls for Joe's parting gift to be a box of condoms and a sparkler. The production omits the sparkler (fire laws or making everything else dim by comparison?) and substitutes a copy of *Huckleberry Finn* (redeeming social content?). The performances of Pascale Armand, Armando Riesco, and Keith Nobbs cannot be faulted; as Joe, Isiah Whitlock Jr. is outstanding, managing even those tricky convulsions midway between laughter and sobs. Lauren Helpen's abstract set and Traci Klainer's stylized lighting contradict the realistic dialogue. It is hard to tell whether the four characters or the four chairs (the principal scenic element) are more involving. ■

Elaine Stritch at Liberty

Stritch's solo show moves to Broadway.

Four

By Christopher Shinn.
See Theater listings for details.



Battle Weary

The Met's new *War and Peace*—skirmishes, balls, and free-falling infantrymen notwithstanding—still comes up short as an epic opera experience.

CONSIDERING THE HEATED hype that preceded the Met's new production of *War and Peace*—Prokofiev's heroic attempt to make a viable opera from Tolstoy's epic novel—an anticlimax of sorts was probably inevitable. And indeed, the promised spectacle and technical marvels, said to be the most imposing ever in Met history, looked fairly tepid, although the Battle of Borodino, the burning of Moscow, the French winter retreat, the elaborate ballroom scenes, and a detailed cross section of Russian society between 1809 and 1812 were at least duly suggested and tastefully realized. No doubt that master of Met magnificence, Franco Zeffirelli, would have sniffed condescendingly at George Tsypin's minimalist sets and Andrei Konchalovsky's rather plain direction. As for the audience, the first sign of real excitement on opening night came near the end, when a confused French soldier lost his balance on the hazardous dome-shaped stage and fell into the violin section.

More important than all that, though, is the fact that Prokofiev's unwieldy, uneven, yet continually fascinating masterpiece has finally been staged by the Met. The opera occupied the composer for the last twelve years of his life and only reached the West shortly after his death in 1953, in an abbreviated version at the Florence May Festival with Franco Corelli as an unlikely Pierre Bezukhov. Since then, *War and Peace* has gradually entered the international repertory and has been seen everywhere—even at the Met, thanks to visits by the Bolshoi and English National Opera.

And the more one hears and sees it, the better it gets. The first half, dealing with the relationship between Prince Andrei and Natasha and the events leading up to war, is Prokofiev at his most lyrical and characterful, while in part two even the high-level battle din and poster-art patriotism are at least invigorating. Natasha's music is especially irresistible, at first as innocent and fresh as the spring evening

during which Andrei falls in love with her, later intensifying into twisting pathos through her affair with Anatol to her attempted suicide, and finally reaching a mature stability at Andrei's deathbed as the two characteristic themes meet in the orchestra and softly intertwine.

Both roles are in the best hands. Even if Anna Netrebko's lovely lyrical soprano is a bit too light for Natasha, she sings exquisitely and looks charming, while Dmitri Hvorostovsky's elegant baritone and introspective romantic manner are perfect for the idealistic Andrei. The moving scene of

their reunion and Andrei's death is the highlight of the evening, as well as Prokofiev at his most inspired. There are 68 other solo roles listed in the program, divided among Met regulars and Russian-speaking guests, and the only real disappointment for me was Samuel Ramey's undistinguished Field Marshal Kutuzov, dramatically a cipher and sung with a bad wobble. More surprising was that Valery Gergiev, conducting a score that seemed right down his alley, had such tentative control over the orchestra.

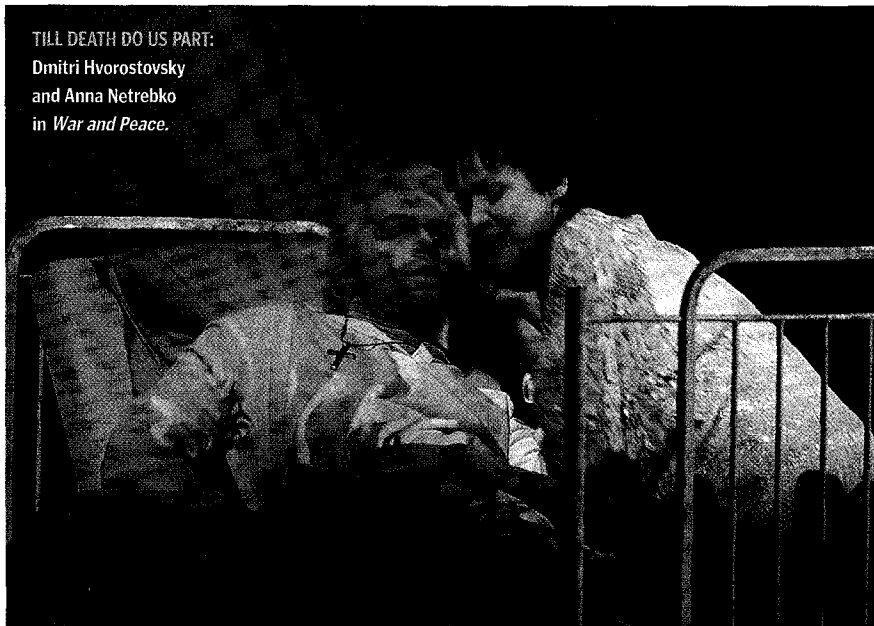
Aside from its unnerving disaster-waiting-to-happen appearance, Tsypin's domed stage and cyclorama background are just old hat. Wieland Wagner staged his first Bayreuth *Ring* cycle in exactly the same arrangement 50 years ago, and with a good deal more ingenuity and imagination—and no one ever fell into the orchestra pit. The cast is huge, of course, but even so, Konchalovsky might have worked harder to put more interesting and detailed characters onstage.

The Met's *War and Peace* is hardly the triumph everyone hoped for. There's actually a lot more to enjoy in the Kirov's earlier production, directed by Graham Vick, if you can locate that hard-to-find Phillips video. ■

War and Peace

The opera by Prokofiev,
conducted by Valery
Gergiev at the
Metropolitan Opera.
See Classical & Dance
listings for details

TILL DEATH DO US PART:
Dmitri Hvorostovsky
and Anna Netrebko
in *War and Peace*.



Peter G. Davis's reviews can be read at
nymetro.com/archive/davis.

Some Girls

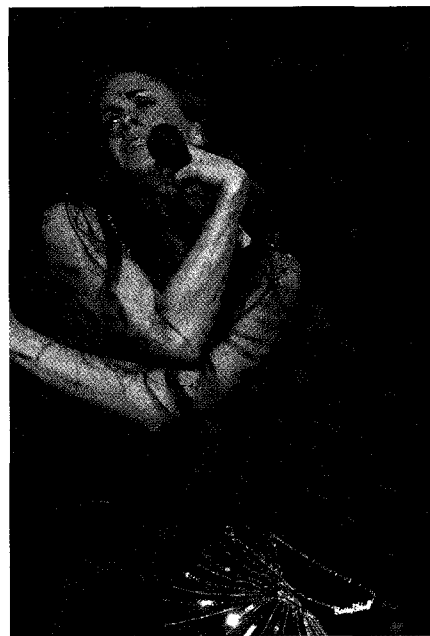
Alanis Morissette makes art of introspection, but *Under Rug Swept* plays like the teen-diary entry its title suggests; Kylie Minogue unabashedly offers the pleasures of a pop tart.

LIKE RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE, which takes from left-wing politics only a screw-the-man attitude, Alanis Morissette gleans from the singer-songwriter tradition just a literal-minded directness. This works when her sensibility is unconventional: "You Oughta Know," with her howl of "Did she go down on you in a theater?," was as shocking in 1995 as Marianne Faithfull's spiteful "Why'd Ya Do it?" was in 1979. Too often, though, Morissette's songs express only an obsession with boys—and the chance to chastise them—telegraphed with all the nuance of the CNN news crawl.

On *Under Rug Swept*, Morissette has the same preoccupations, and what she presents as feminism is simply old-fashioned boy-craziness with an angry edge. There are complaints of mistreatment by boys ("How long can a girl be tortured by you?" she asks on "Flinch"), a dopey list of requirements for a boyfriend ("21 Things," with its unintentionally hilarious qualifier "These are not necessarily needs, but qualities that I prefer"), and even a sort of "Dear John" letter ("Narcissus") written to the different kinds of boys she's dated.

Morissette seems unwilling (or perhaps, given the sales expected of her, it's her label that's unwilling) to step into unfamiliar territory, which is a shame, because her 1999 *Unplugged* album proved that there could be something more to the singer than by-the-numbers resentment of the opposite sex, and the acoustic version of "Uninvited" remains her most convincing performance. Instead, Morissette takes the same tack as many pop personalities with a shrinking audience: circle the wagons around their obsessions. Such a move is sure to be embraced by the faithful, but for everyone else, it just sounds like the same old song.

ON HER NEW ALBUM, *Fever*, AUSTRALIAN POP star Kylie Minogue is as focused on the bed-



WE ARE WOMAN, HEAR US ROAR: From left, Kylie Minogue and Alanis Morissette.

room as Morissette is on her diary. But this single-mindedness yields at least one fantastic radio hit, the appropriately titled "Can't Get You Out of My Head." With Minogue crooning *la la la's* so luscious they're almost tactile, the track's driving blips, and even the singer's own imperfect high notes ("Won't you stayyy?" she whines in the song's chorus), "Can't Get You Out of My Head" is as pleasurable a pop song as anything written by ABBA.

Even the album's sexed-up, hot-and-bothered feel—there's little but vamping and panting on songs like "More More More" and "Give It to Me"—feels liberating in the era of Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears, singers who play Connie Francis one moment and Vanity 6 the next. Minogue is a rarity in the pop world these days: up-front with her sexuality and far enough from her teens for that to be refreshing. Here's hoping the gravity-defying

heels she wears in the video for "Can't Get You Out of My Head" walk right over the lesser pop tarts.

THE INDEPENDENTLY RELEASED FIVE-SONG EP *Master* by the Yeah Yeah Yeahs has suddenly become the buzz around major-label A&R departments. Unlike many sources of such excitement, though, this New York band is worth getting worked up about. Lead singer Karen O has a howl as memorable as Polly Jean Harvey's, and her lyrics ("I need the real thing tonight!") have the dominatrix quality of Harvey's "50 Foot Queenie" days. But there's a dark humor here, too—think the Cramps or the B-52's—especially on "Mystery Girl," who "came from cellblock three," and "Art Star," in which Karen O deadpans this brilliant couplet: "I've been working on a piece that speaks of sex and desperation / I've been screwing on the tracks of abandoned train stations." ■

Alanis Morissette <i>Under Rug Swept</i> (Maverick)
Kylie Minogue <i>Fever</i> (Capitol)
Yeah Yeah Yeahs <i>Master</i> (Shifty)



Ethan Brown's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/brown.

Diggin' It

Six Feet Under returns for a second season, further out than ever; Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Sarah Paulson strike out into sitcom territory, neither hitting the mother lode.

THAT A SECOND SEASON OF *Six Feet Under*, HBO's morbid mortuary series, should show up in the same week as two new sitcoms on NBC—both of them heavily promoted between halfpipes and ice-dancing during the Olympics, neither of them ignoble, but neither, either, asking of us an IQ much above room temperature—is merely coincidental. Still, it is a coincidence that's also instructive. While premium cable wins all those Emmys because it dares to surprise us, network comedies like *Watching Ellie* and *Leap of Faith* are so desperate to ingratiate themselves with the feckless yuppie demographic that they seem to be checking their pulse in a panic after every punch line.

At least Julia Louis-Dreyfus is luckier in *Watching Ellie* than Jason Alexander and Michael Richards, her fellow *Seinfeld* refugees, turned out to be in the witless sitcoms contrived for their fleeting return to prime time. As Ellie instead of Elaine, she is a thirtyish single the camera stalks for 22 minutes every Tuesday, on the run from a

stopped-up toilet ("like a beautiful woman in a canoe," says her Peeping Tom building superintendent, Peter Stormare), on the ricochet from one boyfriend (Steve Carell, who is obnoxious) to another (Darren Boyd, who is English), singing for her supper in an L.A. nightclub (sort of like Jerry doing stand-up). That Julia really can sing we already knew from ABC's ludicrous *Geppetto*; that we can count on her to do so once a week without Drew Carey is enough to get us through the Wonder Bra and cell-phone jokes.

So, too, is agreeable Sarah Paulson lucky, to be out of *Jack & Jill* and into almost anything else, even *Leap of Faith*, which wants to remind us of *Sex and the City* and *Friends* but succeeds mainly in making me mourn Joan Cusack. As Faith Wardwell, Paulson is about to marry the postnasal-drippy Bradley White until she shacks up one afternoon with Brad Pitt look-alike Brad Rowe, an actor who has auditioned for one

of her ad agency's TV commercials. (Think Meg Ryan in *Sleepless in Seattle*, plus Calista Flockhart in the car-wash episode of *Ally McBeal*.) This requires her to rethink all of her categorical imperatives, which

means a lot of yakking in bars and restaurants with her affinity group of chums, including Lisa Edelstein, who works with her at the agency, Ken Marino, who writes for *Rolling Stone*, and Regina King, who's already married. Nobody sings, but there are a couple of pretty funny golf jokes in the second episode.

We've seen these shows before; we will see them again; they must be what Nietzsche meant by "eternal recurrence." And compared with *Six Feet Under*, which introduced us

last summer to a Fisher family of undertaking worrywarts, they taste like aspirin. Superintended by Alan Ball (*American Beauty*), tag teams of writers and directors not only gave us Rachel Griffiths to think about but also killed off scam artists, gang leaders, and porn stars by swimming pools or municipal buses or cookie-dough mixers, and then raised these ungrateful dead-heads up from their gurneys to sing, dance, and soliloquize, as if Evelyn Waugh had gone to bed with Dennis Potter's Singing Detective. All this, plus a missing foot.

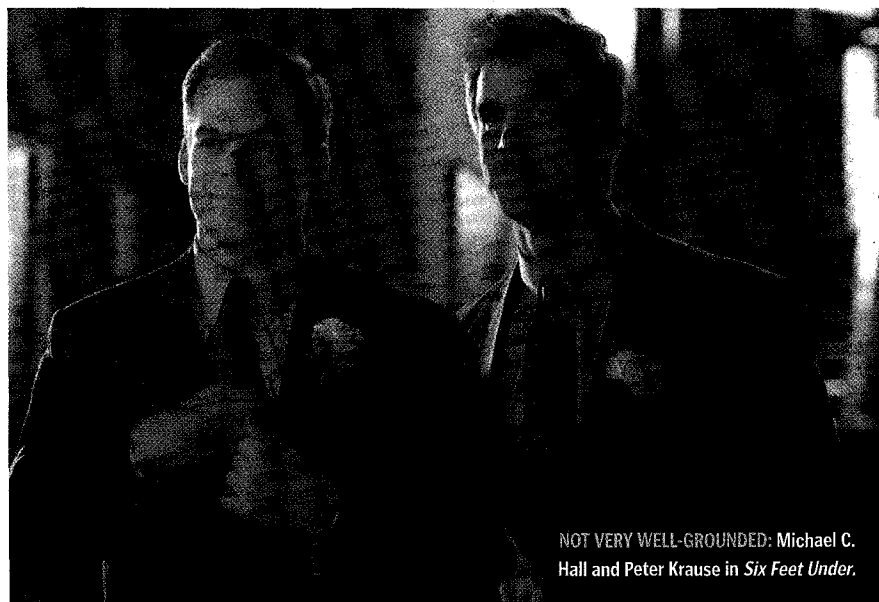
So return with us now to Los Angeles where Brenda (Griffiths) is headed for a crack-up even before she hits her mother, the crazy psychiatrist Joanna Cassidy; where Nate Fisher (Peter Krause) can't bring himself to tell Brenda that he has a brain tumor; where David Fisher (Michael C. Hall) advertises in the *L.A. Weekly* Personals column even though he's still in love with Keith the cop (Michael St. Patrick); where Claire Fisher (Lauren Ambrose) finds out that her loser of a boyfriend has stolen a bit of her family's embalming fluid to spike some lethal joints; and where Ruth Fisher (Frances

Six Feet Under
Sundays, beginning March 3; 9 to 10 P.M.; HBO.

Watching Ellie
Tuesdays, beginning February 26; 8:30 to 9 P.M.; NBC.

Leap of Faith
Thursdays, beginning February 28; 8:30 to 9 P.M.; NBC.

Jeremiah
Premieres Sunday, March 3; 8 to 10 P.M.; Showtime.

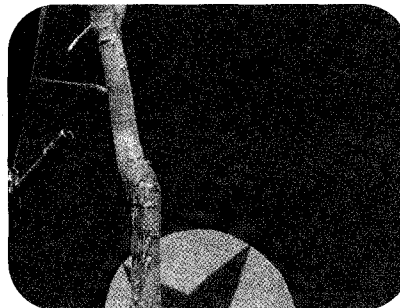


NOT VERY WELL-GROUNDED: Michael C. Hall and Peter Krause in *Six Feet Under*.

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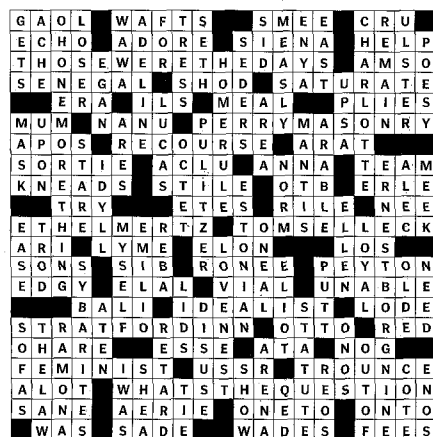
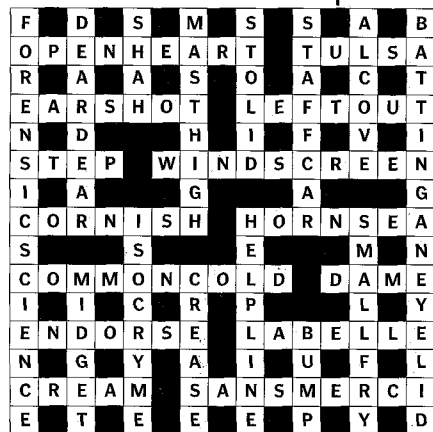
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NEW YORK

Conroy), the mother of all these other Fishers and the only one who can't seem to see the ghost of her dead husband (Richard Jenkins) playing Chinese checkers, is off to psychobabble seminars that seem compounded equally of Scientology, primal scream, and est; and where guest star Lili Taylor will eat tofu meat loaf and talk to ants. I've seen only the first four new episodes of *Six Feet Under*, but already it's clear that the series has left Waugh for Samuel Beckett. After which, amazing television, it could go absolutely anywhere.

Finally, *Jeremiah*, a new post-apocalyptic sci-fi series from the J. Michael Straczynski who gave us five years of *Babylon 5*, will settle in on Friday nights on Showtime after its Sunday premiere—starring Luke Perry, who still can't act, and Malcolm-Jamal Warner, who has at last recovered from *The Cosby Show*, as futuristic derring-doodlers. This is so far very, very slow. But I mention it because its premise helps explain what's become of the rest of television. According to the *Jeremiah* time frame, fifteen years before we meet Luke Perry, an out-of-control virus killed everybody in the whole world who was older than puberty. Thus has an entire universe of discourse been ordained that consists of nothing but the most desirable demographic.

Solutions to last week's puzzles



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• **Elizabeth** (FEBRUARY 26 THROUGH MARCH 1; 9 to 10 P.M.; History Channel) lets Tudor historian David Starkey opinionize promiscuously about the Virgin Queen, between lavish stills and elegant recreations, from the beheading of her mother to the plays of Shakespeare.

• **Dead in a Heartbeat** (March 3; 8 to 10 P.M.; TBS) lets Timothy Busfield go one better than Denzel Washington. Instead of taking a hospital hostage when his son becomes mortally ill, Timothy rigs all of heart surgeon Penelope Ann Miller's pacemakers to explode inside her patients. Only the bomb squad's Judge Reinhold can save Penelope from a career crisis.

• **Crossed Over** (March 3; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) is based on the true story of Beverly Lowry, played by Diane Keaton, who comes to terms with the hit-and-run death of her troubled son only in consultation with death-row inmate Karla Faye Tucker (Jennifer Jason Leigh). Overcome your natural resistance to this sort of thing. The performances are astonishing. ■



John Leonard's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/leonard.

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Bar Keepers

At craftbar, the casual annex to Tom Colicchio's ethereal Craft, you can eat like an off-duty chef. Uptown, the Bar @ Etats-Unis gives us even more reasons to belly up.

YOU MIGHT THINK THAT ALL chefs aspire to the trappings of culinary greatness: the Beard awards, the celebrity following, the *Iron Chef* victory. But for some, that's not enough. In their quasi-candid moments, they'll confess their true desire. More than fame, more than fortune, more than a fat cookbook contract, what they really crave is a good sandwich. The more refined and elegant their own cooking, the greater the hankering for unpretentious food and an atmosphere to match. Even our loftiest gourmets have their underground moments.

We recently heard Tom Colicchio divulge a particular weakness for Melampo, a Sullivan Street takeout shop adored by sandwich cognoscenti. But in between supervising the kitchens at Craft and Gramercy Tavern, consulting at Bid, launching a line of packaged foods, and strategizing the forthcoming Craftsteak in Las Vegas, the man can't have very much time for SoHo sub runs. Maybe that's why he and Marco Canora, his deputy and the de facto chef at Craft, opened **craftbar**, right next door.

Think of craftbar as the place where the author of *Think Like a Chef* invites you to eat like a chef. It's a more elaborate take on 'ino or Bar Veloce—two popular restaurant-industry hangouts—crossed with more than a little Lupa; this is a place where you might expect to spot Mario or Rocco, or at least their sous-chefs, downing a beer and some fried oysters at the bar after a long night of braising beef cheeks.

But in spite of its name, craftbar is a full-fledged restaurant, with solicitous service of the Colicchio-Danny Meyer school; a spare, vaguely Mission-style design; a no-reservations policy; and a core menu of snappy, Italian-accented appetizers, salads, soups, cured meats, and sandwiches, for a fraction of what you'd pay next door—not exactly cheap, but worth it. Call it cut-rate Colicchio.

PRESSING ENGAGEMENT: craftbar's coppa-and-hot-soppresata panino.



You can spend as little or as much as you want—particularly if you stick to tasty snacks like deep-fried morsels of sausage stuffed in sage leaves, or a trio of risotto balls, an elegant version of something you'd find in a Brooklyn focacceria or a Mulberry Street deli. Here, they're suffused with fontina and pecorino and swathed with tomato sauce. If your idea of bar food is fried mozzarella sticks, the anchovy-tinged mozzarella in carrozza will be a revelation. Bruschetta comes in four guises, all impressive, the messy marriage of poached eggs and melted tomatoes especially so (and it's not cut into little pieces, like the garlicky salt cod or chunky chicken liver, so you don't have to share). Jewish penicillin has got nothing on Canora's extra-

strength chicken soup with chicken meatballs. We love the smooth mortadella dotted with silky squares of fat, and the other house-cured meats, but with all this wine—sixteen by the glass—where's the cheese?

The Parmigiano and provolone at craftbar are restricted to meticulously pressed,

streamlined sandwiches, served on an airy open-crumb bread that's been squeezed and toasted to a maximum crunch. A bit of Craft sneaks in via the combination of smoky duck ham, salty Taleggio, and hen-of-the-woods mushrooms, the arcane fungus that Colicchio has nearly made a household name. The two terrific cold sandwiches, a veal tonnata and a mortadella, are triple-decker takes on tramezzini, the crustless Venetian tea sandwiches.

These wine-friendly tidbits are supplemented by three daily specials—a pasta, a fish, and a meat—that are hearty, rustic, and, in general, as unadorned as the room. Saturday's veal-ricotta meatballs are just that: four feathery-light orbs in a tiny pool of lightly creamy tomato sauce, without a strand of spaghetti in sight. You could plan your week around the specials, returning night after night without suc-

cumbing to menu fatigue. Our favorites, in calendar order: Sunday's masterly, multilayered spinach lasagne Bolognese. Tuesday's braised pork belly, a tender hunk of succulent meat layered with fat, served over salty French lentils. Wednesday's brontosaurian slab of braised lamb ribs, embellished with dabs of preserved lemon. And on Friday, craftbar hits a trifecta: savory sausage with beans, earthy duck pappardelle, and an exquisite fillet of fried flounder, as full of ocean flavor as if it were just pulled from the sea and quickly fried in salt pork by some gourmet Yankee sea captain.

Pastry chef Karen DeMasco puts together complete dessert plates instead of inviting diners to match a tart with an ice cream and a fruit, as she does next door at Craft. Her combinations are flawless—especially hot, greaseless apple fritters with caramel ice cream, a good substitute for a weekend in Vermont; and a slice of dark, creamy chocolate tart (think pot de crème with a crust) with candied-pistachio ice cream.

IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT THE ENDEARINGLY MINUSCULE Etats-Unis is another haunt of Col-

craftbar
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icchio's; the New American Upper East Side kitchen shares his obsession with fresh, seasonal ingredients, and the chef-owners share his aversion to culinary pomp and circumstance (not to mention dining irritants like smoking and cell phones). Two years ago, almost unbeknownst to the dining public, *Etats-Unis*, too small for a bar of its own, built one across the street. Considering it's only got 24 seats—seven of them bar stools—**The Bar @ Etats-Unis's** low profile is certainly a blessing. But we'd be remiss if we neglected to spread the word about what might be the Upper East Side's best gourmet bargain. In a wasteland of mediocre pasta and Chinese takeout, the Bar is a beacon of low-key luxury, serving an all-day menu of well-appointed salads and elevated comfort food, ranging from \$10 to \$15 (versus the \$32 you'd pay for rack of lamb across the street). Most dishes begin in the *Etats-Unis* kitchen, where vegetables are grilled and short ribs are braised into stews before being shuttled across the street and behind the bar, where a dexterous cook fashions meals with a convection oven, a hot plate, and amazing agility.

Despite his limited circumstances, the chef doesn't stint on flavor. You're asked how spicy you'd like your first-rate, made-to-order guacamole, and that's how it comes. The classic Caesar is properly pungent with anchovy and Parmigiano. Beef stew is potent stuff, perfect with a full-bodied red wine from a list interspersed with lesser-known Spanish and German selections.

There's always a terrine—sometimes duck, sometimes fennel and pheasant—accessorized with cornichons and mustard. As at *craftbar*, there's a fish of the day, a pasta, and a soup; recently, a bowl of peppery parsnip-leek purée and house-baked bread made a satisfying prelude to the fragrant date pudding with rum-caramel sauce and freshly whipped cream.

One quiet afternoon—lunch is still very much a secret—we struck up a conversation with the manager, who, unprompted, proceeded to praise Tom Colicchio and the bar at *Gramercy Tavern*. He hadn't been to *craftbar* yet, but he was planning to. Great minds, after all, eat alike. ■

craftbar, seven days, noon to 1 A.M. Appetizers, \$4–\$8; entrées, \$15–\$18. All major credit cards.

The Bar @ Etats-Unis, Monday through Saturday, noon to midnight; Sunday, 5 P.M. to midnight. Dishes, \$10–\$15. All major credit cards.

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Love Needs No Pedigree



Photo by Mary Bloom.

Maury Povich, host of the nationally syndicated talk show "MAURY", with League orphan "Lucky"

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NEW THIS WEEK

Borstal Boy

Caught with an IRA bomb, Irish writer Brendan Behan (Shawn Hatosy) spent World War II in a British youth correctional facility. This re-creation of his famous memoir of those years hits many familiar notes—the kind governor (Michael York), the affectionate best friend (Danny Dyer), and the redemptive female (Eva Birthistle)—but it's still absorbing and well acted. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) • Opens 3/1.

Esther Kahn

Summer Phoenix, as a Jewish girl in nineteenth-century London who dreams of becoming an actress, commands the screen with a beguiling mix of delicate innocence and curious determination. A dense, fascinating film from France's Arnaud Desplechin, bursting at the seams with characters, ideas, and gestures. (2 hrs. 25 mins.; NR) • Opens 3/1.

40 Days and 40 Nights

After breaking up with his girlfriend (Vinessa Shaw), Josh Hartnett puts his abstinence to the ultimate test in Michael Lehmann's (*Heathers*) romantic comedy. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) • Opens 3/1.

Ram Dass Fierce Grace

Ram Dass, né Richard Alpert, was one of the pivotal spiritual leaders of the sixties counterculture. This documentary is so doting, however, that one wonders if something is being left unsaid. Nevertheless, he makes a fascinating subject, most poignantly when pondering the spiritual ramifications of his deteriorating health. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) • Opens 2/27.

Trouble Every Day

Vincent Gallo plays an American doctor on his honeymoon in Paris, haunted by the cannibalism his li-

bido demands. Béatrice Dalle is a mysterious woman who regularly indulges those same needs. Shockingly, director Claire Denis's cause célèbre is not a horror film or a comedy but a heartbreaking tale of desire and repression. (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) • Opens 3/1.



JUST SAY NO: Josh Hartnett and Vinessa Shaw in *40 Days and 40 Nights*.

We Were Soldiers

Braveheart screenwriter Randall Wallace directs Mel Gibson as a colonel who leads a battalion through Ia Drang, the Vietnam War's first major battle. With Chris Klein. (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) • Opens 3/1.

REVIEWS BY BILGE EBIRI

New Films

★ Amélie

Treacle this elaborately inventive deserves some kind of blue ribbon. (Rainer; 11/12/01) (2 hrs.; R) • 1; 11; 12; 15; 17; 27; 29; 47; 64.

American Adobo

Director Laurie Guillen's romantic comedy follows the lives of five friends who've moved from rural Asia to downtown New York. (1 hr. 44 mins.; R) • 2.

A Beautiful Mind

Russell Crowe plays the real-life mathematician and paranoid schizophrenic John Nash in this rather conventionalized view of madness and creativity. Ron Howard directed. (Rainer; 1/7/02) (2 hrs. 9 mins.; PG-13) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 22; 28; 30; 43; 44; 46; 50; 51; 54; 58; 61; 63; 71; 72; 73; 74.

Beijing Bicycle

Two Chinese boys vie for the same bicycle in *So Close to Paradise* director Wang Xiaoshuai's story of an unlikely friendship. (1 hr. 53 mins.; PG-13) • 7.

Big Bad Love

Arliss Howard directed and stars in this southern-fried bummer as a down-on-his-luck alky Mississippi writer. It's one long slog through the writer's fragmented consciousness, and not even the presence of Debra Winger as his wife can lift the picture out of the muck. (Rainer; 3/4/02) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) • 5.

Big Fat Liar

When a Hollywood producer (Paul Giamatti) turns a student's essay into a hit film, the 14-year-old (Frankie Muniz) road-trips to California to reclaim his work. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) • 10; 12; 16; 22; 29; 30; 36; 41; 43; 44; 45; 46; 52; 53; 54; 56; 58; 59; 61; 62; 65; 70; 71; 73; 74; 76.

Birthday Girl

Nicole Kidman plays a Russian mail-order bride and

Ben Chaplin is the withdrawn British clerk who sends for her. The film's tone wobbles between screwball comedy and *Straw Dogs* lite. (Rainer; 2/11/02) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) • 17.

★ Black Hawk Down

Ridley Scott's lacerating war movie puts you right into the clamor of combat. But it's so stripped down of political context that it becomes numbing and repetitive. (Rainer; 1/1/02) (2 hrs. 23 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 16; 22; 32; 34; 43; 44; 46; 51; 58; 61; 63; 71; 74; 76.

The Brotherhood of the Wolf

It's an overlong, overloud mélange. (Rainer; 1/14/02) (2 hrs. 25 mins.; R) • 10; 17; 71.

The Cherry Orchard

Michael Cacoyannis (*Zorba the Greek*) unites a cast of European heavyweights in this adaptation of Chekhov's play about a Russian noblewoman (Charlotte Rampling) returning to her decaying family estate. A long, stagy slog. (2 hrs. 17 mins.; NR) • 7; 20.

Collateral Damage

Originally slated for a fall release, this Arnold Schwarzenegger film can now be seen more objectively for what it is: a stinker. (Rainer; 2/18/02) (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 23; 32; 34; 39; 40; 41; 42; 44; 45; 46; 51; 52; 53; 54; 55; 56; 59; 61; 62; 63; 65; 68; 69; 72; 74; 75; 76.

The Count of Monte Cristo

James Caviezel plays an escaped French prisoner who cloaks his identity to seek revenge on his betrayers. Directed by Kevin Reynolds (*Waterworld*). (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 18; 22; 32; 39; 44; 50; 60; 63; 74.

Crossroads

Three childhood friends road-trip out west after high school, each for her own reasons. This being Britney Spears's acting debut, there are songs, messages, and midrifts aplenty. (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • 6; 14; 15; 16; 22; 33; 34; 40; 43; 44; 45; 46; 51; 53; 54; 57; 59; 60; 61; 63; 65; 70; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Dragonfly

Kevin Costner plays a doctor whose deceased wife appears to be sending him messages from the beyond, and the film veers drunkenly between horror and romance, as if it can't decide if its central conceit is scary or reassuring. (2 hrs. 10 mins.; PG-13) • 6; 14; 15; 16; 17; 29; 32; 43; 46; 51; 53; 54; 56; 57; 59; 61; 63; 68; 70; 72; 73; 74; 76.

★ Gosford Park

Robert Altman's murder mystery is an artful blend of whodunit and something deeper—a meditation on class and a vanishing gentry. (Rainer; 12/24/01) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) • 10; 13; 15; 16; 22; 25; 43; 48; 50; 64; 66.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Chris Columbus's literal-minded, scrupulously faithful rendition of J. K. Rowling's beloved children's best-seller lacks transcendence. (Rainer; 11/19/01) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; PG) • 24.

Hart's War

The production values in this German POW camp melodrama are impressive, but otherwise it's strictly Hollywood and Rhine. It's messagey and clichéd. (Rainer; 2/25/02) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 22; 29; 32; 37; 40; 43; 44; 45; 46; 51; 53; 54; 57; 61; 63; 70; 71; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

★ Hedwig and the Angry Inch

An East German rock-and-roll drag queen (John Cameron Mitchell) winds up in Junction City, Kansas, in a winning film version of the popular Off Broadway play. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) • 8.

How to Kill Your Neighbor's Dog

A famous playwright (Kenneth Branagh) finds himself faced with an artistic crisis—some subplots work better than others, but they all feel secondhand. Co-starring Robin Wright Penn. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) • 2; 11.

I Am Sam

Sean Penn plays a single father with the mental age of 7 trying to gain sole custody of his daughter in this mush-minded tearjerker. (Rainer; 12/24/01) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; PG-13) • 2; 14; 16; 17; 18; 19; 32; 43; 60; 74.

★ In the Bedroom

Todd Field, in his directorial debut, has made a fine, straightforward film about a murdered son and the parents who slowly writhes for retribution. As the parents, Tom Wilkinson and Sissy Spacek are extraordinary. (Rainer; 11/26/01) (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) • 1; 13; 15; 16; 17; 29; 36; 38; 47; 50; 60; 73; 76.

Iris

Judi Dench and Jim Broadbent are Iris Murdoch and John Bayley in Richard Eyre's overly fussy movie about the famous English literary couple and Murdoch's descent into Alzheimer's. With Kate Winslet and Hugh Bonneville. (Rainer; 12/10/01) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) • 10; 43.

Italian for Beginners

Lone Scherfig's *Dogma* 95 film is set at a community-center class, which becomes the social nexus for six Copenhagen thirtysomething singles. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 1; 25; 38; 64.

Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius

Animated film about the world's smartest boy, who battles evil and saves the Earth but still has to face his parents and school. (1 hr. 22 mins.; G) • 24.

John Q

Denzel Washington plays a factory worker whose in-

Ground Rules These synopses, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote releases that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. **NOTE:** Each review is followed by numbers indicating theaters where the film is playing; a key to theaters begins on page 64.

surance doesn't cover a heart transplant for his boy. So he holds hostage a hospital emergency room until his son gets approved for the treatment. The cast for this howlingly bad movie includes Robert Duvall, Anne Heche, Ray Liotta, and James Woods, and was directed by Nick Cassavetes. (Rainer; 2/25/02) (1 hr. 58 mins.; PG-13) • 6; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 32; 37; 39; 40; 44; 45; 46; 49; 51; 53; 54; 55; 56; 58; 61; 63; 65; 70; 71; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Kandahar

Iranian writer-director Mohsen Makhmalbaf's film is about a female journalist (Nelofer Pazira) who must bypass the Taliban to rescue a suicidal sister in Afghanistan. In Farsi, with English subtitles. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) • 2.

Kate & Leopold

Meg Ryan and Hugh Jackman are falling in love, but they're from different time zones—Ryan in contemporary New York, Jackman in the late nineteenth century. (2 hrs. 2 mins.; PG-13) • 24.

Kung Pow: Enter the Fist

Steve Oedekerk stars as a mediocre karate master attempting to avenge his parents' death in this martial-arts spoof, which he also directed. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG-13) • 53.

Lantana

Anthony LaPaglia plays a Sydney police detective whose search for a missing psychiatrist intersects with four unhappily married couples—including him and his wife. With Geoffrey Rush. (2 hrs.; R) • 7; 11; 38; 64.

★ Last Orders

A marvelous movie about lifelong friends who carry out a buddy's last request to have his ashes scattered at sea. Based on the much-lauded Graham Swift novel and directed by the great Fred Schepisi, it employs a flashback structure that is sometimes unsatisfying, but the cast of modern-day players, including Michael Caine, Tom Courtenay, Helen Mirren, David Hemmings, Ray Winstone, and Bob Hopkins, is as good as it gets. (Rainer; 2/18/02) (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) • 10; 38.

★ The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring

For most of the way, Peter Jackson's film of J.R.R. Tolkien's book *The Fellowship of the Ring* is powerfully imaginative. (Rainer; 12/25/01) (2 hrs. 40 mins.; PG-13) • 10; 12; 16; 22; 27; 43; 51; 61; 71; 76.

The Man Who Wasn't There

The movie isn't there, either. (Rainer; 11/5/01) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) • 2.

Maryam

An absorbing, timely portrait of an Iranian-American family and its assimilated teenage daughter (Mariam Parris) coping with gradual isolation in the New Jersey suburbs during the 1979 hostage crisis. Director Ramin Serry's debut feature is refreshingly nonjudgmental and heartfelt, but the day belongs to young Parris, whose vibrant presence is nothing short of revelatory. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • 1.

Mean Machine

The football classic *The Longest Yard* gets the *Full Monty* treatment, as Vinnie Jones (*Snatch*) plays a soccer star-cum-prisoner who leads a ragged team of inmates in a fixed match against their brutal guards. Pandering at first, but it's hard to argue with that spectacular game at the end. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) • 10; 17.

★ Monsoon Wedding

Mira Nair's giddy movie about the preparations for an arranged marriage in New Delhi is an entertaining pastiche of Bollywood nuttiness and *Father of the Bride*. Most of the interweaving plots are standard-issue soap, but the pop disposability of it all is very appealing. (Rainer; 3/4/02) (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) • 5; 26.

Monster's Ball

Willie Bob Thornton plays a Georgia death-row prison guard who winds up in a depth-charged affair with the wife of a man he helped execute. As the wife, Halle Berry is hell-bent on showing us how unglamorous she can be, but her bracing openness periodically snaps the movie out of its arty dreamwalk. Marc Forster directed. (Rainer; 1/14/02) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) • 5; 14; 17; 31; 38; 40; 46; 48; 50; 53; 54; 64; 76.

The Mothman Prophecies

Richard Gere plays a widowed newspaper reporter who becomes consumed by paranormal activity in West Virginia. Directed by Marc Pellington. (1 hr. 52 mins.; PG-13) • 16; 17; 58; 63; 74.

Much Ado About Something

Australian documentarian Michael Rubbo investigates the theory that Christopher Marlowe ghostwrote Shakespeare's works. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) • 4.

Mulholland Drive

Naomi Watts and Laura Elena Harring play an ingenue and an amnesiac shady lady making their way through a noirish L.A. dreamscape in David Lynch's latest weirdo fantasia. (Rainer; 10/22/01) (2 hrs. 26 mins.; R) • 3; 17.

No Man's Land

Three soldiers, two Bosnians and a Serb, are stuck between enemy lines during the Bosnian war in writer-director Danis Tanovic's Golden Globe-winning debut feature film. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) • 17.

★ Ocean's Eleven

George Clooney and Julia Roberts co-star in this heist movie set in Vegas, but Steven Soderbergh's direction is the real show here: It's an eye-in-the-sky tour de force.

Opening

That '60s Show

Richard Alpert had spent the better part of the past 40 years preparing for his death. So when he suffered a partially paralyzing stroke in 1997, he expected visions, clarity, a sign. "I flunked," says Alpert (renamed Ram Dass by his guru), the alluring subject of documentarian Mickey Lemle's *Ram Dass Fierce Grace*, of his near-death experience. "I failed because my faith was not strong enough. But now I'm on the leading edge of my consciousness." That is, in fact, where Lemle's film begins—intercut with archival footage of Alpert as the Harvard psychology professor who



dropped out with Timothy Leary; as the affluent Jewish Bostonian who found God in India; as the author of *Be Here Now*, a 2 million-copy best-seller on metaphysics. "I was after him for ten years to do a movie. Then, six months after his stroke, he finally agreed," says Lemle, 51, a two-time Emmy Award nominee. "He said, *This isn't who I thought I'd be*, and that mirrored my process as a filmmaker; I had to let go of the movie in my head and see what was before me." The film is about Alpert's third spiritual reinvention at the ripe age of 70, but if that sounds too New Agey, then Ram Dass's rascally sense of humor isn't coming through. "I could've pursued psychology," Ram Dass says, "but life would have been more . . . boring." Opens February 27. B.K.

Gene Hackman, Anjelica Huston, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Danny Glover. It's about a family of prodigies gone to seed, and Anderson frames everyone in tight, flat compositions, as if he were offering up these people as specimens. (Rainer; 12/10/01) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) • 10; 16; 17; 27; 43; 64.

Scotland, PA.

A smirky reworking of *Macbeth* starring James Le Gros and Maura Tierney as Shakespeare's plotting duo. (Rainer; 2/11/02) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) • 10.

★ Scratch

Doug Pray's engaging, informative documentary about the hip-hop DJ scene is a fun triptych. (Rainer; 2/25/02) (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • 5; 17.

Second Skin

Spanish director Gerardo Vera's film stars Javier Bardem as a surgeon who becomes involved with a married man. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 7.

★ The Shipping News

The film is a modestly successful adaptation of the

(Rainer; 12/10/01) (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) • 17.

Piñero

Benjamin Bratt shows the rise and fall of seventies outlaw poet Miguel Piñero in Leon Ichaso's (*Sugar Hill*) film. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) • 5.

Queen of the Damned

Stuart Townsend reawakens Anne Rice's vampire Lestat in Michael Rymers' film, also starring the late pop star Aaliyah. (1 hr. 22 mins.; R) • 10; 15; 16; 22; 32; 39; 40;

41; 42; 44; 45; 46; 49; 51; 52; 53; 54; 55; 56; 58; 59; 61; 63; 65; 67; 69; 71; 73; 74; 76.

Return to Neverland

Disney's lackluster (and possibly blasphemous) sequel to its 1953 classic *Peter Pan* has Captain Hook kidnapping the now-grown-up Wendy's daughter Jane and carting her off to Neverland. (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) • 2; 11; 15; 17; 21; 39; 40; 41; 42; 44; 45; 46; 49; 50; 51; 53; 54; 58; 59; 60; 61; 62; 63; 65; 67; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Revolution OS

This documentary about the beginnings of open source (i.e., non-proprietary) software will appeal to the geek set, but may leave others scratching their heads. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) • 3.

Rollerball

Director John McTiernan's futuristic remake of the Norman Jewison film stars Chris Klein, LL Cool J, and Rebecca Romijn-Stamos as teammates whose toughest opponent is the league's bloodthirsty owner, played by Jean Reno. (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG-13) • 17; 45; 46; 51; 53; 58; 61; 63; 70; 74.

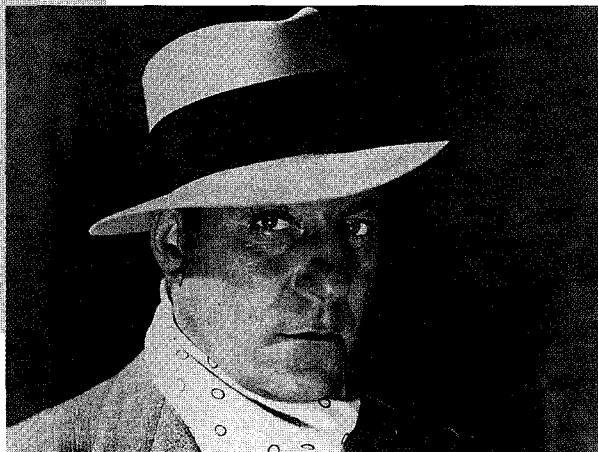
The Royal Tenenbaums

Wes Anderson's movie has a tip-top cast, including

Onscreen

Back to Algeria

Hidden among the winding alleyways and connected rooftops of the Casbah, the tempestuous underworld of Algiers, is **Pépé Le Moko** (Jean Gabin, pictured), the wanted Parisian thief and homesick antihero of Julien Duvivier's black-and-white 1937 film noir. The picture, an influence on everything from *Casablanca* to the French New Wave to Warner Bros. cartoons, features double-crossings; crooked cops; and an outlaw on the run, the women he loves, and an exotic locale that Pépé can't stand. In a new 35-mm. print, with restored sound and new subtitles, at Film Forum beginning March 1.



Annie Proulx novel about a closed-off man, played (rather too reticently) by Kevin Spacey. Julianne Moore, Judi Dench, and Pete Postlethwaite co-star. (Rainer; 1/7/02) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) • 29.

Shiri

South Korean director Kang Je-Gyu's timely, unusual action film features a love story between a North Korean terrorist and a member of South Korea's secret police. (2 hrs. 6 mins.; R) • 2; 17.

Snow Dogs

Cuba Gooding Jr. plays a Miami dentist who inherits an Alaskan dog-sledding team. Directed by Brian Levant (*The Flintstones*). (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG) • 17; 44; 46; 51; 53; 61; 63; 70; 72; 74; 76.

The Son's Room

Nanni Moretti directed and co-wrote and stars in this film about a psychiatrist in a small Italian town who must cope with the unexpected death of his son. Moretti has a soft-spoken humor, but the film is too awed by its depiction of the healing power of love. (Rainer; 2/4/02) (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) • 1; 38.

Storytelling

Todd Solondz's two-part movie is an uneven attempt at extending his taboo-busting rep. Solondz is turned on by shocking subject matter, but for all his intellectualized pretensions, he doesn't get much more from this than an exploitation filmmaker would. (Rainer; 1/21/02) (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) • 1; 47.

Super Troopers

The comedy team Broken Lizard plays a bunch of stoner Vermont state troopers doing battle with local cops and inept drug smugglers while trying to save their own jobs. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 2; 11; 12; 17; 27; 29; 35; 44; 51; 57; 63; 69; 71; 72; 74; 76.

Vanilla Sky

Cameron Crowe directed; Tom Cruise, Penélope Cruz, and Cameron Diaz co-star; and the whole convoluted and unconvincing mess is perhaps the most baroque chick flick ever made. (Rainer; 12/17/01) (2 hrs. 16 mins.; R) • 24.

★ Waking Life

Richard Linklater's film is about a young man who passes through a linked series of encounters that may or may not be dreams. One of the very best movies of the year. (Rainer; 10/29/01) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 3.

A Walk to Remember

Pop star Mandy Moore plays a minister's daughter who falls in love with a popular jock. Directed by Adam Shankman. (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG) • 17; 71.

Wendigo

A well-to-do family goes off into the mountains for a weekend getaway and finds itself at the mercy of rednecks and demons in art-horror auteur Larry Fessenden's film. Sends actual chills up your spine for about an hour, but then fades. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) • 4.

What Time Is It There?

Taiwanese film director Tsai Ming-Liang has an artful visual and aural sense. Still, this movie, about a watch seller who becomes enamored of a Paris-bound customer, though pleasing to watch, employs a wearying amount of Antonioni-esque alienation effects. (Rainer; 1/21/02) (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) • 3.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

1. CC Angelika Film Center

18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • Amélie; In the Bedroom; Italian For Beginners; Maryam; The Son's Room; Storytelling

2. CC Village East

189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • American Adobo; How to Kill Your Neighbor's Dog; I Am Sam; Kandahar; The Man Who Wasn't There; Return to Neverland; Shiri; Super Troopers

3. Cinema Village

22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • Mulholland Drive; Revolution OS; Waking Life; What Time Is It There?

4. Film Forum

209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) • Umberto D; Much Ado About Something; Wendigo (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

5. Landmark Sunshine Cinema

143 E. Houston St. (212-358-7709) • Big Bad Love; Monsoon Wedding; Monster's Ball; Piñero; Scratch

6. Loews Village

66 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Crossroads; Dragonfly; John Q; Training Day

7. Quad Cinema

34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • Beijing Bicycle; The Cherry Orchard; Lantana; Second Skin; Trembling Before G-d

8. The Screening Room

54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) • Hedwig and the Angry Inch; Metropolis; Moulin Rouge

9. Two Boots Pioneer Theater

155 E. 3rd St. (212-212-254-3300) • The Business of Strangers; Donnie Darko; In the Mood for Love (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

10. UA Union Square

13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; The Brotherhood of the Wolf; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Gosford Park; Hart's War; Iris; Last Orders; The Lord of the Rings; Mean Machine; Queen of the Damned; The Royal Tenenbaums; Scotland, PA.

14th-41st Streets

11. CC Murray Hill Cinemas

160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • Amélie; How to Kill Your Neighbor's Dog; Lantana; Return to Neverland; Super Troopers

12. Clearview's Chelsea

260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • Amélie; A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Hart's War; The Lord of the Rings; Super Troopers

13. Clearview's Chelsea West

333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • Gosford Park; In the Bedroom

14. Loews 19th St. East

890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • Crossroads; Dragonfly; I Am Sam; John Q; Monster's Ball

15. Loews 34th St. Theatre

312 W. 34th St. (212-244-8850) • Amélie; A Beautiful Mind; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Gosford Park; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland

16. Loews Kips Bay Theatre

550 Second Ave., at 32nd St. (212-50-LOEWS#558) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Gosford Park; Hart's War; I Am Sam; In the Bedroom; John Q; The Lord of the Rings; The Mothman Prophecies; Queen of the Damned; The Royal Tenenbaums

42nd-60th Streets

17. AMC Empire 25 Theatres

234 W. 42nd St. (212-398-3939) • Amélie; Birthday Girl; The Brotherhood of the Wolf; Dragonfly; I Am Sam; In the Bedroom; Joe Somebody; John Q; Mean Machine; Metropolis; Monster's Ball; Monsters, Inc.; The Mothman Prophecies; Moulin Rouge; Mulholland Drive; No Man's Land; Ocean's Eleven; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; The Royal Tenenbaums; Scratch; Shiri; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers; Training Day; A Walk to Remember

18. CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3

1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • The Count of Monte Cristo; I Am Sam; John Q

19. CC Eastside Playhouse

919 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-755-3020) • I Am Sam

20. Clearview's 59th Street East

239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • The Cherry Orchard

21. Clearview's Ziegfeld

141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • Return to Neverland

22. Loews 42nd Street E Walk

42nd St. at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Gosford Park; Hart's War; The Lord of the Rings; Queen of the Damned

23. Loews Astor Plaza

44th St. at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Collateral Damage

24. Loews State

1540 Broadway, nr. 45th St. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius; Kate & Leopold; Vanilla Sky

25. New York Twin

1271 Second Ave., nr. 66th St. (212-505-CINE#590) • Gosford Park; Italian For Beginners

26. Paris Theatre

4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • Monsoon Wedding

61st Street and Above, East Side

27. CC 86th St. East

210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • Amélie; The Lord of the Rings; The Royal Tenenbaums; Super Troopers

28. Clearview's Beekman

1254 Second Ave., nr. 65th St. (212-777-FILM#606) • A Beautiful Mind

29. Clearview's First & 62nd St.

400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • Amélie; Big Fat Liar; Dragonfly; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; The Shipping News; Super Troopers

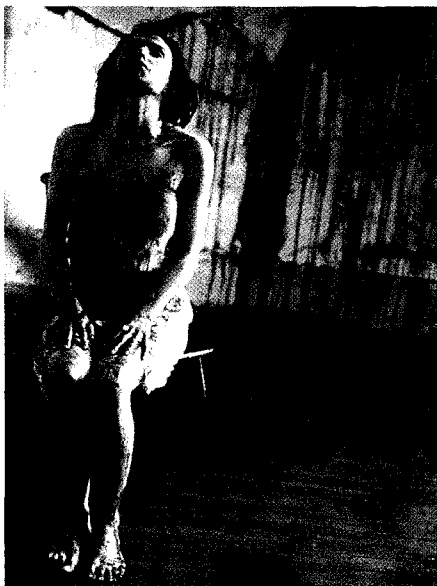
30. Clearview's Park and 86th St.

125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar

- 31. Loews 72nd St. East**
1230 Third Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-50-LOEWS#704)
• *Monster's Ball*
- 32. Loews Orpheum 7**
1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Dragonfly; Hart's War; I Am Sam; John Q; Queen of the Damned
- 33. UA East**
1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • Crossroads
- 34. UA Gemini**
1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads

61st Street and Above, West Side

- 35. Clearview's 62nd and Broadway**
1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • Super Troopers
- 36. Clearview's Metro Cinema**
2626 Broadway, nr. 99th St. (212-777-FILM#609) • Big Fat Liar; In the Bedroom
- 37. Clearview's Olympia**
2770 Broadway, nr. 106th St. (212-777-FILM#613) • Hart's War; John Q
- 38. Lincoln Plaza Cinemas**
30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway nr. 62nd St. (212-757-2280) • In the Bedroom; Italian For Beginners; Lantana; Last Orders; Monster's Ball; The Son's Room
- 39. Loews 84th Street**
2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland
- 40. Magic Johnson Harlem USA**
300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Hart's War; John Q; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland
- 41. New Coliseum**
701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland
- 42. Nova**
3589 Broadway, nr. 147th St. (212-862-5728) • Collateral Damage; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland
- 43. Sony Lincoln Square**
1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Gosford Park; Hart's War; I Am Sam; Iris; The Lord of the Rings; The Royal Tenenbaums



Every Day. The artsy French splatterfest stars Vincent Gallo and Béatrice Dalle (pictured) as reluctant cannibals who meet through Dalle's husband (Alex Descas), a radical physician and expert on deviant sex. Though the unrated picture was resoundingly denounced at Cannes, it may nevertheless provide Denis with a boost. Remember that *Hannibal* did nothing to hurt Ridley Scott's career—he's up for an Academy Award this year, for *Black Hawk Down*. Opens March 1.

Bronx

- 44. Bay Plaza**
2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Hart's War; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers
- 45. Concourse Plaza**
214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Hart's War; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball
- 46. Whitestone**
2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs

Brooklyn

- 47. BAM Rose Cinemas**
30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • Amélie; In the Bedroom; Storytelling (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")
- 48. Brooklyn Heights Pavilion**
70 Henry St. (718-369-0838) • Gosford Park; Monster's Ball
- 49. Canarsie**
9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) • John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland
- 50. Cobble Hill Cinema**
265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • A Beautiful Mind; The Count of Monte Cristo; Gosford Park; In the Bedroom; Monster's Ball; Return to Neverland
- 51. Court Street 12**
106 Court St. (718-246-7469) • A Beautiful Mind; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; The Lord of the Rings; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers
- 52. Kent Triplex**
Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Queen of the Damned
- 53. Linden Boulevard Multiplex**
Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; Kung Pow: Enter the Fist; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs
- 54. Pavilion**
188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland
- 55. Pavilion Flatbush**
314 Flatbush Ave. (718-596-7070) • Collateral Damage; John Q; Queen of the Damned
- 56. Ridgewood**
55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Dragonfly; John Q; Queen of the Damned
- 57. UA Marboro**
6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; Super Troopers

Opening

Hunger Strikes

Since the brouhaha over Todd Solondz's *Storytelling* faded fast, the most controversial release this year will probably be Claire Denis's *Trouble*

FINE PRINT Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon are signed on for the film adaptation of the recent *New Yorker* story "The Real Heroes Are Dead." The piece



told the story of Rick and Susan Rescorla, who met late in life and married after a whirlwind romance shortly before his death on September 11. Sarandon hopes to star; Robbins would adapt the story

and direct. No studio is yet attached.

CON MAN Native New Yorker Ed Burns—who next appears opposite Angelina Jolie in *Life, or Something Like It*—has signed on to star in *Confidence*, a suspense drama for director James Foley (*Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Fear*). Burns will star as a con man named Jake Vig who winds up indebted to a criminal warlord for past wrongdoing; the film will follow the ultimate scam that Vig pulls in order to escape. Lions Gate Films will produce.



TRAFFIC IN THE TWILIGHT ZONE George Clooney and Steven Soderbergh are apparently steering away from dramatic true-life narratives. Their Section 8 production company just bought the rights to sci-fi author (and renowned meth-head) Philip K. Dick's novel *A Scanner Darkly*. The latest purchase in a company buying spree that has included Kurt Eichenwald's *The Informant: A True Story* and Max Barry's *Jennifer Government*, the book tells the futuristic story of a drug dealer named Bob Arctor whose own addiction to the drug he sells (the mysterious Substance D) induces him to embody two personalities—the second being someone he would never have suspected.

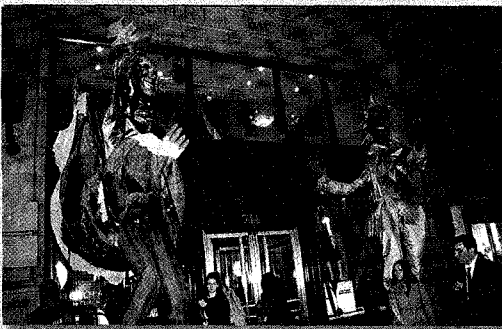
FILMMAKING FEET John Cusack and Drew Barrymore have reportedly signed on to appear in Disney's *Kinky Boots*. Cusack will play the new boss of Barrymore's struggling family shoe business who envisions transforming it into an erotic footwear emporium; Judi Dench is considering a role as Barrymore's mother. Production is scheduled to begin this summer.

SARA CARDACE

ADVERTISEMENT

NEW YORK. Happenings

PROMOTIONS • SPECIAL EVENTS



(Clockwise from top) Larger than life rod puppets welcome guests at the entrance of Henri Bendel; Jamaica Tourist Board Director of Tourism Noel Mignott and Henri Bendel Director of Marketing Teril Turner; Area Youth Krew from Kingston; Talk show host Ananda Lewis; Designer Cedella Marley; Stylist Lisa Sellers; Consul General of Jamaica in the Consulate of Jamaica Dr. Basil Bryan and Noel Mignott; The scene at Henri Bendel



Paradise at Henri Bendel

Perfectly timed for the Spring fashion season, the spirit of Jamaica was demonstrated through clothing, art, dance, music, and food on January 30 at Henri Bendel. Every floor featured the latest Henri Bendel fashion trends along with a unique Jamaican experience. From wood carvers and cigar rollers to hat weavers and hair braiders, over 700 of Manhattan's trendsetters enjoyed a fashionable island getaway—NEW YORK style, Henri Bendel, 712 Fifth Avenue at 56th Street.

Nicole Miller Launches Men's Collection at Lord & Taylor

On Thursday, March 14 at 6 p.m. in The Man's Shop at Lord & Taylor, meet designer Nicole Miller and special guest Keith Hernandez, former New York Mets World Series champion. Enjoy informal modeling and discover the newest style trends for Spring. Lord & Taylor, 424 Fifth Avenue, The Man's Shop, 10th Fl., 212.391.5379.

Lord & Taylor

The World's Largest Shopping Party

On Monday, March 11, the World's Largest Store host the biggest shopping party ever. From 5 - 9 p.m. Macy's Herald Square will close its doors to the general public for a night of serious shopping with a powerful purpose. A portion of all purchases will support National Multiple Sclerosis Society, NYC Chapter. On each floor, discover extraordinary gifts and values. For every \$100 you spend, receive a \$15 gift card. See the cast of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and enter to win tickets to dinners, and other prizes. Tickets: \$5 at the door. (Proceeds go to MS.) For more information call 212.494.4163.

macys

Barneys' Windows

During the month of December, NEW YORK Magazine and Barneys New York partnered to create excitement and traffic in New York, Chicago and Beverly Hills. The windows featured NEW YORK Magazine's *Holiday* covers spanning almost 34 years. As part of Barneys' tribute to our "New Yorker of the Year", NEW YORK Magazine's Rudy Giuliani cover was highlighted in a dedicated window display in New York City. Special thanks to sponsors Absolut, Campari, Delta and Evian.



(Top) Barneys New York Howard Socol, Barneys New York Creative Director Simon Doonan, NEW YORK Magazine Publisher Alan Katz; (Bottom) Barneys New York "Rudy the Right Reindeer" window display

58. UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay

3907 Shore Pkwy., off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; John Q; The Mothman Prophecies; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball

Queens**59. Centre Sunnyside**

42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland

60. Cinemart

106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) • The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; I Am Sam; In the Bedroom; Return to Neverland

61. College Point Multiplex

28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; The Lord of the Rings; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs

62. Jackson Triplex

82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Return to Neverland

63. Kaufman Astoria Cinema

38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • A Beautiful Mind; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; The Mothman Prophecies; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers

64. Kew Gardens Cinemas

81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • Amélie; Gosford Park; Italian for Beginners; Lantana; Monster's Ball; The Royal Tenenbaums

65. Main Street Cinemas

72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland

66. North Shore Towers

27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) • Gosford Park

67. Plaza

103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) • Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland

68. UA Brandon Cinema

70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • Collateral Damage; Dragonfly

69. UA Crossbay

94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • Collateral Damage; Queen of the Damned; Super Troopers

70. UA Crossbay II

92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • Big Fat Liar; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs

71. UA Midway

108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; The Brotherhood of the Wolf; Hart's War; John Q; The Lord of the Rings; Queen of the Damned; Super Troopers; A Walk to Remember

72. UA Movieworld

242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • A Beautiful Mind; Collateral Damage; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers

Staten Island**73. Atrium**

680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland

74. Staten Island Stadium 16

2474 Forest Ave. (718-273-4200) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; I Am Sam; John Q; The Mothman Prophecies; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers

75. UA Hylan Plaza

107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-

0805) • Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Hart's War; John Q; Return to Neverland

76. UA Movies at Staten Island

141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; John Q; The Lord of the Rings; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers

Museums, Societies, Etc.**77. American Museum of the Moving Image**

36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); \$8.50. • "A Pinewood Dialogue With Visual Effects Supervisor Jim Rygiel." 2/28: *Lord of the Rings* (2001). "New York, New York: Films Selected by the New York Film Critics Circle." 3/2: *Love Affair* (1939); *Where the Heart Is* (1990). 3/3: *Force of Evil* (1948); *Pickup on South Street* (1953).

78. BAM Rose Cinemas

30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn (718-623-2770); \$9. • "John Houseman: He Earned It." 3/1: *Executive Suite* (1954). 3/2: *Citizen Kane* (1941). 3/3: *They Live by Night* (1948).

79. Brooklyn Museum of Art

200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); free. • "Brooklyn Film Network Presents: Brooklyn Docs." 2/28: *Lavender Lake* (2001).

80. Cinema Classics

332 E. 11th St. (212-677-5368); \$5. • 2/28-3/3: *The Third Man* (1949).

81. Film Forum

209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); \$9. • 3/1-3/4: *Pépé Le Moko* (1937).

82. Film Society of Lincoln Center

65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); \$9. • "Taking No Prisoners: The Films of Sergio Bianchi." 3/1: *The Secret Cause* (1994); *Chronically Unfeasible* (2000); *Romance* (1987); *Should I Kill Them?* (1982). 3/2: *Chronically Unfeasible* (2000); *Romance* (1987). 3/3: *The Secret Cause* (1994); *Should I Kill Them?* (1982). 3/5: *Chronically Unfeasible* (2000); *Romance* (1987). 3/6: *The Secret Cause* (1994); *Chronically Unfeasible* (2000). 3/7: *Chronically Unfeasible* (2000).

83. Japan Society

333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155); \$9. • "Dark Visions: Japanese Film Noir & Neo-Noir." 3/1: *Endless Desire* (1958).

84. Museum of Modern Art

11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); free with \$10 admission, \$6.50 for students and seniors. • "The First Decade: Video From the EAI Archives." 2/26: *Home* (1973); *Hearts* (1979); *Sunstone* (1979); *Bird's Eye* (1978); *The Rays* (1970); *Tilt* (1973); *Hello Boys* (1975). 2/28: *May Day Real Time* (1971); *Chinatown Voyeur* (1971). 3/1: *The Laughing Alligator* (1979); *The Cuna Indians of San Blas* (1978); *Between the Lines* (1979). 3/2: *Hello* (1969); *Theme Song* (1973); *Performer/Audience/Mirror* (1975).

85. New York Children's Film Festival

(DGA Theater) 110 W. 57th St. (212-349-0330); \$6. • 3/1: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937); *Betty Boop in Snow White* (1933); *Snow White and Rose Red* (1953). (Cantor Film Center; 36 E. 8th St.) "Shorts for Tots." 3/2-3/3: *The Magic of Anansi* (2001); *Color Combination* (2000); *Lunar Jig* (2001); *Puppetry* (2000). "Short Films One." 3/2-3/3: *Aliens?* (2000); *Cartoon Sea* (2001); *Koro's Big Day Out* (2001); *Hubert's Brain* (2001); *Village of Idiots* (1999); *The Teacup* (2001). "Shorts for Teens." 3/2-3/3: *I Killed a Cyclist* (2001); *Butterflies in Your Stomach* (2001); *Snack and Drink* (1999).

86. New York Historical Society

2 W. 77th St. (212-969-0968); \$7. • "The Silent Clowns Film Series: Comedians at War." 3/3: *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924).

87. Ocularis

70 N. 6th St., Brooklyn (718-388-8713); \$5. • "Reports From the Global Village." 3/3: *Downwind: Depleted Uranium Weapons in the Age of Virtual War* (2001); *A Trip to the Country* (1998).

87. Scandinavia House

Victor Borge Hall, 58 Park Ave., nr. 38th St. (212-779-3587); \$8. • "New Icelandic Films." 2/27: *Dramarama* (2001).

88. YWCA Cine-Club

610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); \$7. • "Cinema of the Shadows: The Hollywood Film Noir." 3/2-3/3: *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946).

One Love at Piaget

The romance of Jamaica inspired 150 guests to find the perfect Valentine's Day gift for their loved one at Piaget's Fifth Avenue boutique on February 6. At the private event, hosted by NEW YORK Magazine, Piaget, and Jamaica, guests were entertained by the sounds of Jamaica and enjoyed authentic Jamaican delicacies and cocktails.



(Left to right) Jamaica Tourist Board Director of Tourism Noel Mignott, NEW YORK Associate Publisher Ginger Sutton, Piaget President Bob Filotti, Jamaica Tourist Board Advertising Manager Marie Deeble



Oz Actor Leon poses with guest and Jamaica Tourist Board Marketing Representative Michelle Toyloy

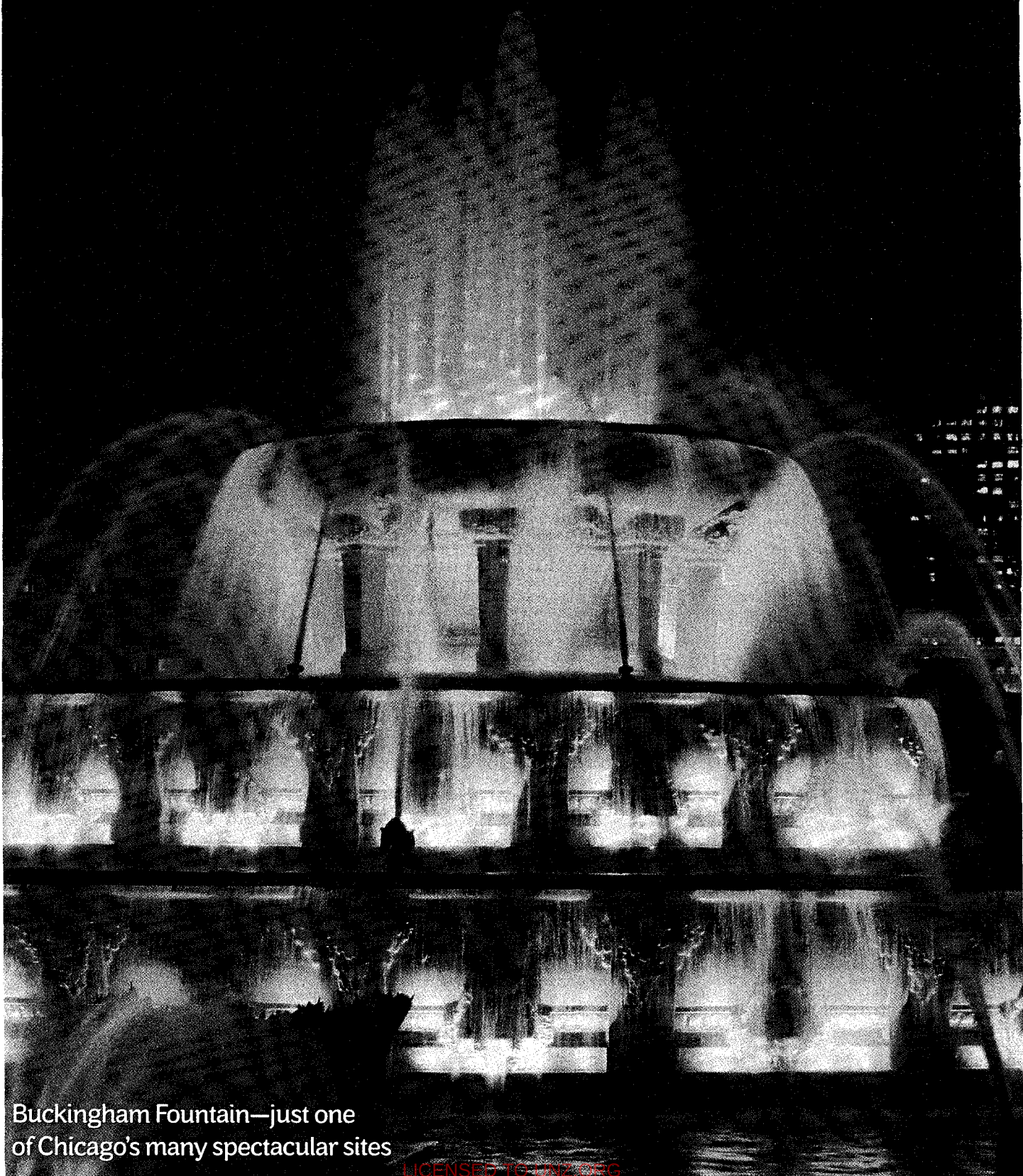


Nancy Molten models Piaget jewelry

Above Photographs by Piero Ribelli

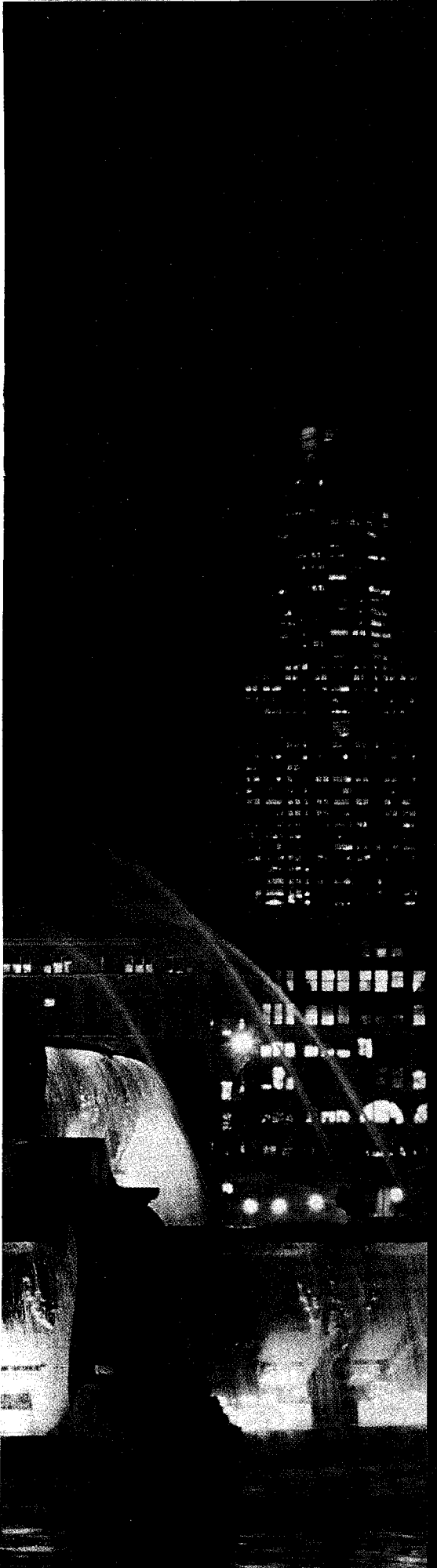
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Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Crucible

Liam Neeson and Laura Linney star in Arthur Miller's allegorical tale of the Salem witch trials. \$40-\$85. Tues.-Sat. at 7:30, Wed. and Sat.-Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/5 opening. • Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200)

The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?

Edward Albee's highly anticipated new play follows a successful architect (Bill Pullman) who, at the pinnacle of his career, must confess to his wife (Mercedes Ruehl) and son some awful secret. \$65-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/10 opening. • Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Metamorphoses

A very welcome Broadway transfer, writer-director Mary Zimmerman's striking meditation on mutability was one of the fall's most surprising successes. Restlessly contemporary but utterly visceral, Zimmerman and her company put a 27-foot-long pool of water to perfect use, stressing the elemental nature of Ovid's classic tales of Midas, Narcissus, and more. These are myths rendered with dramatic flair, unpretentious humor, and a heartbreaking final tableau; this transformative mix should transmute into a sharp Broadway success. \$30-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/4 opening. • Circle in the Square Theatre, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

Oklahoma!

Super-choreographer Susan Stroman (*The Producers*, *The Music Man*) and director Trevor Nunn (*Les Miz*) bring their acclaimed revival of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic *Stateside*. An award-winning smash in London with many of the best-known show tunes ever ("The Surrey With the Fringe on Top," "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'"), the production stars Patrick Wilson (*The Full Monty*) as Curly and Olivier winner Josefina Gabrielle as Laurey. Talented stage vets Andrea Martin and Shuler Hensley round out the cast. \$20-\$90. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/21 opening. • Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).

Opening

One Mo' Production

Set in the legendary New Orleans Lyric Theatre in 1926, when Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey were singing the blues there, **One Mo' Time** showcases some furious cakewalks, rags, and Charlestons—and some prodigious pipes. An Off Broadway hit that ran for more than three years beginning in 1979, the musical went on to win a cast-album Grammy nomination and several Olivier awards in London. This time, the impressive cast features the big-stage vocals of B. J. Crosby (*Smokey Joe's Cafe*), Roz Ryan (*Dreamgirls*, *Chicago*), and Rosalind Brown (*Little Shop of Horrors*). They'll be joined by Vernel Bagneris (pictured, with, from left, Crosby, Ryan, and Brown), who wrote and directs, and will star, just as he did in the original run. In previews for a March 6 opening. (See "Broadway.")

Sweet Smell of Success

John Lithgow stars as J.J. Hunsecker, the powerful gossip columnist and star-maker, in this new musical adaptation based on the Lehman novella and the brutal Ernest Lehman-Clifford Odets screenplay. Directed by Nicholas Hytner and choreographed by Christopher Wheeldon, this dark musical is brought to the stage by a strong team of Broadway vets. Music by Marvin Hamlisch; lyrics by Craig Carnelia; book by John Guare. \$26-\$96. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/14 opening. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Now Playing

Aida

Disney's epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian prince, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. More important, the eye-popping sets and chichi costumes are designed by Bob Crowley. \$25-\$90. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

An Almost Holy Picture

Kevin Bacon, a fine stage actor long before *Footloose*, plays Samuel Gentle, a groundskeeper for the Church of the Holy Comforter who struggles to divine some religious truth, in Heather McDonald's drama. \$40-\$65. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2 and 8. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

Bea Arthur on Broadway: Just Between Friends

The wry grande dame Bea Arthur, who won a Tony for her portrayal of Vera Charles in *Mame* and originated the role of the matchmaker Yente in *Fiddler on the Roof*, looks to compete with Elaine Stritch. Accompanied by pianist Billy Goldenberg, she sings classics, reflects on decades in the business, and touches on *Golden Girls*, the sitcom that made her a household name and, oddly enough, a gay-culture favorite. \$50-\$65. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 3/10. • Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Beauty and the Beast

The family-friendly musical adaptation of Disney's film is no *Lion King*, but it's still entertaining kids by the busload. \$25-\$85. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2,

Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

★ Cabaret

This gritty revival of the Kander and Ebb musical won four Tonys in 1998 for its portrayal of the decadent world of Weimar-era Berlin cabaret. Based on Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories*, the production has a much darker edge than the Bob Fosse film. Now starring Molly Ringwald and Raúl Esparza. \$25-\$95. Mon., Tues., Thurs.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 3/19/98. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Chicago

This delightfully raunchy musical tribute to tough women and the men they murder won six Tonys in 1996. In this stylish production, choreographed by Ann Reinking and directed by Walter Bobbie, female inmates in a Jazz Age Chicago prison vie for the attention of a flashy lawyer and the tabloid press. \$20-\$90. Mon., Tues., Thurs.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 11/14/96. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Contact

This sensational, Tony-blessed dance-theater work by John Weidman and Broadway's reigning director-choreographer, Susan Stroman, presents a triptych of inventive pieces, ranging from a naughty flirtation to a suicidal adman's frantic fantasy. Charlotte d'Amboise, Colleen Dunn, and D. W. Moffett now star. \$90. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Elaine Stritch At Liberty

Elaine Stritch takes her smash-hit solo show to Broadway. George Wolfe directs. \$40-\$85. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5. Through 5/26. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (212-307-4100).

★ 42nd Street

Come and meet those dancin' feet. This revival of the Al Dubin and Harry Warren musical about the proverbial chorus girl who gets her big break is snappily directed by Mark Bramble, with exuberant choreography by Randy Skinner, and features a top-notch cast: Michael Cumpsty, Christine Ebersole, David Elder, Jonathan Freeman, and Mary Testa. \$20-\$95. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).

★ The Full Monty

A rambunctious yet heartfelt musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. Music and lyrics by David Yazbek; book by Terrence McNally; directed by Jack O'Brien. \$31-\$86. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Les Misérables

An audacious button-pusher with over-the-top songs like "Do You Hear the People Sing?" and "I Dreamed a Dream," producer Cameron Mackintosh's mega-hit, based on the Victor Hugo novel, still stands as the best of the big British commercial imports. \$20-\$85. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/12/87. • Imperial Theatre, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

★ The Lion King

Based on the popular Disney movie, this sublimely inventive production showcases some of the best experimental theater techniques of a generation, wrought with joyful mastery by experimental director extraordinaire Julie Tay-



PHOTOGRAPH BY CARL POSEY.

You Light Up My Life

It's the **Sweet Smell of Success** indeed for Brian d'Arcy James, who has landed one of the plummiest Broadway roles in recent memory. The *Titanic*, *Carousel*, and *Wild Party* veteran plays the craven, sycophantic flack Sidney Falco—the Tony Curtis role—opposite the legendary gossip columnist and celebrity puppetmaster J. J. Hunsecker (John Lithgow, pictured, with James). The much-anticipated new musical (music by Marvin Hamlisch, lyrics by Craig Carnelia) is drawn from the vicious 1957 film written by Ernest Lehman and Clifford Odets, one of the great newspaper movies that media junkies quote as often as drag queens parrot Mae West. "Match me, Sidney and I'd hate to take a bite out of you—you're a cookie full of arsenic: Those lines are still in there," says James. "But John Guare's book is unique unto itself." Contrary to standard musical-theater procedure—simplify, simplify—James says that some added back story allows audiences "to get to know Sidney before he's knighted by Hunsecker. It's more clear that he's a workaday guy who has this dream and this innate talent—this gift of the gab—that hasn't been fulfilled." The show rides an aptly intense wave of press scrutiny into its Broadway run, following a Chicago tryout that generated decidedly mixed reviews. "The tone has shifted since the first round of reviews, and the stakes are now higher for Sidney," says James, sounding like someone who's only recently learned the art of spin. "Because of that, it's going to be very surprising what happens to Sidney toward the end." In previews for a March 14 opening. (See "Broadway.")



L.H.

mor, and rewarded with a bouquet of Tonys in 1998. \$30–\$95. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. • New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

★ Mamma Mia!

This season's feel-good hit is an unabashedly silly musical about a young bride-to-be and her single mom scored with 22 shimmering disco tunes by Abba's Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus. Louise Pitre, Judy Kaye, Tina Maddigan, and Karen Mason star. Call for schedule. \$55–\$98.75. • Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-563-5544).

★ Noises Off

Patti Lupone, Peter Gallagher, Richard Easton, and Faith Prince star in this lively revival of Michael Frayn's London hit, a slapstick farce about a touring theatrical troupe. \$40–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Brooks Atkinson Theater, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

One Mo' Time

A New Orleans jazz romp, written and directed by Vernel Bagneris, is set in the Lyric Theatre in 1926, where Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey belt out the blues and dancers cakewalk, Charleston, and swing. \$30–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/6 opening. • Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

The Phantom of the Opera

Andrew Lloyd Webber's campy version of the macabre tale, given an opulent spin by director Hal Prince. \$20–\$90. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

★ The Producers

Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick produce the ul-

timate "surefire flop," *Springtime for Hitler*, in Mel Brooks's triumphant musical and Tony Award record-setter. Based on his Oscar-winning 1968 film, directed and choreographed with aplomb by Susan Stroman, this giddy romp is the hottest ticket in town. \$30–\$100. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7:30. • St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Proof

Jennifer Jason Leigh plays a chronically depressed young woman whose father, a famous mathematician, recently lost his mind and then his life. When Catherine's type-A sister rolls into town for the funeral, a graduate student (the exceptional Josh Hamilton) finds a groundbreaking proof among her father's otherwise nonsensical papers and Catherine is jolted out of her near-catatonic state and into the confusing world around her. Justly rewarded with a Pulitzer and several Tonys, David Auburn's *Proof* is a virtuoso piece of writing. Daniel Sullivan's direction is impeccable. \$24–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

"QED"

Alan Alda returns in Peter Parnell's longish two-character drama about the quirky physicist Richard Feynman, which drew sellout crowds despite mixed reviews last fall. Sun. and Mon. at 7:30. 2/17–5/13. • Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Reht

The late Jonathan Larson's hauntingly scored, Pulitzer-winning reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as lived by a gaggle of East Village hipsters at the peak of grunge and the AIDS epidemic. \$35–\$80. Mon., Tues., Thurs. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 4/29/96. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

In this shticky Manhattan comedy by downtown "gender illusionist" and camp playwright Charles Busch, Tony Roberts and Valerie Harper play a hyper allergist and his frazzled self-improving wife, whose worlds are upended by the arrival of a globetrotting debutante (played by *Knots Landing* vet Michele Lee). \$30–\$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Urinetown

A downtown hit, this weird musical, with book and lyrics by Greg Kotis and music and lyrics by Mark Hollman, is now a Broadway smash. The plot? In a corrupt city beset by a disaster of apocalyptic proportions, water is worth its weight in gold, and pedestrians are forced to comply with a pay-per-pee system. \$75–\$85. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Godfadda Workout

Comedic actor Seth Isler parodies the Coppola classic. Woody Fraser directs. \$20–\$50. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 3/17 opening. • American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Helen

Tony Kushner directs a new comic drama by Ellen McLaughlin (*Tongue of a Bird*), in which Helen of Troy is zapped into a modern-day Egyptian hotel room, where she paints her nails and awaits news reports of the war she left behind. Johanna Day, Donna Murphy, Denis O'Hare, Phylicia Rashad, and Louise Wilson star. \$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/17 opening. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Mr. Goldwyn

In a bit of inspired casting, comedic actor Alan King plays the contentious Hollywood producer Samuel Goldwyn in this new drama by Marsha Leiby and John Lollo. Neil Simon specialist Gene Saks (*Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues*) directs. \$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/13 opening. • Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).

Necessary Targets

Based on interviews Eve Ensler (*Vagina Monologues*) conducted in Yugoslavia, the drama tracks two American women, a psychiatrist and a writer, who travel to Bosnia to help women refugees struggling with the aftermath of war. Shirley Knight and Diane Venora star; Michael Wilson directs. \$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 2/28 opening. • Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

Prodigal

This new Australian musical, with book and lyrics by Dean Bryant and music by Matthew Frank, follows a teenager from his rural town to the big city. \$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 3/7 opening. • York Theatre at St. Peter's in the Citigroup Center, 619 Lexington Ave. (212-239-6200).

Surviving Grace

Ileana Douglas (*Ghost World*) and Doris Belack star in Trish Vradenburg's new play about a mother and daughter's fitful reconciliation. \$30–\$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 3/12 opening. • Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-7171).

Now Playing

Blue Man Group: Tubes

Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, tourists, haters and lovers of performance art. \$55–\$65. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 2, 5, and 8. Opened: 11/17/91. • Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

Circumference of a Squirrel

John Walch's new one-man play stars Paul Sparks (*Coyote on a Fence*) as a confused, frustrated, and conflicted man who is fired by the dean of his university, divorced by his wife, and forced to make some sense of his life. \$35. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/17. • Urban Stages, 259 W. 30th St. (877-737-3285).

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)

A 90-minute crash-course through the Bard's works, including a nine-second *Hamlet*. \$25-\$55. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2, 5, and 8, Sun. at 4. • Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Cymbeline

Director Bartlett Sher and Theatre for a New Audience open their lauded, energetic production of Shakespeare's rarely produced romance after a very successful run in the Bard's homeland. The play romps through country tunes, ancient Rome and Britain, and the Wild West. \$55. Tues.-Sat. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Through 3/3. • Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (212-212-239-6200).

De La Guarda

A raucous show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. \$20-\$50. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show

A wild, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. Cable sex icon Robin Byrd hosts on Wednesdays. \$39. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Embers

Like Albee's *Occupant*, Catherine Gropper's drama is also about the New York artist Louise Nevelson. \$25-\$40. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. Through 3/3. • Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-279-4200).

Finder's Fee

Wesley Moore's romantic drama transpires in the corrupt arena of New York real estate. \$35. Mon., Wed.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10. Through 3/3. • Rattlestick Theatre, 224 Waverly Place (212-627-2556).

Fool for Love

Sam Shepard's drama about two former lovers who reunite at a run-down hotel at the edge of the Mojave Desert, directed by Tim Corcoran. \$35. Mon.-Sat. at 8. Through 3/30. • 29th Street Rep Theatre, 212 W. 29th St. (212-206-1515).

Forbidden Broadway 20th Anniversary Celebration
Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof of musicals past and present, which takes swipes at productions like *The Producers* and *The Full Monty*. \$49.50-\$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. • Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Four

Twentyish playwright Christopher Shinn found success in a Worth Street production of this drama last year, and has been rewarded with this MTC transfer. Directed by Jeff Cohen, Shinn's drama tracks the lives of four ordinary folks who meet at a Hartford, Connecticut, July 4 celebration. \$45. Tues.-Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • MTC Stage 2 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Further Than the Furthest Thing

Neil Pepe directs an ambitious new drama by Zinnie Harris, in which a volcanic eruption forces residents to flee a small island off the South African coast. The play tracks the refugees' resettlement to Southampton, England. \$55. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and Sun. at 2:30 and 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Golden Ladder

Donna Spector's new play about a woman's reconciliation with her family. \$50. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (212-239-6200).

Good Time Blues

Genovis Albright and Madame Pat Tandy star in this blues revue. \$30. Sat. and Sun. at 3, Mon. at 8.

Previews

Maternal Material

Last year, playwright Trish Vradenburg had a little surprise success with *Surviving Grace* at the Kennedy Center. Now the former sitcom writer (*Designing Women*, *Kate & Allie*, *Family Ties*) is



bringing her comedy to New York. Based on Vradenburg's relationship with her own mother, the bittersweet play follows a television writer (Ileana Douglas, pictured, left) who attempts to reconcile with a mom suffering from Alzheimer's (Doris Belack, right). Jack Hofsis (*The Elephant Man*) directs. In previews for a March 12 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")

a crime unfolds in front of your Italian dinner. \$59. Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 7. • Arno Ristorante, 141 W. 38th St. (800-687-3374).

Naked Boys Singing

Just like a regular musical revue, but without pants. \$35-\$50. Mon., Wed.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, and Sun. at 3 and 7. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

★ Occupant

The very busy Edward Albee opens his new drama about Louise Nevelson, the iconoclastic artist known best for her environmental sculpture. The sensational Anne Bancroft plays the artist; Anthony Page directs. \$45-\$65. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Signature Theatre, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

★ One Man (Berkoff Is Back)

The frighteningly good actor Steven Berkoff returns with a suitably dark suite of solo one-acts, including his creepy rendition of *The Tell-Tale Heart*, the masochistic story *Ador*, and *Dog*, a scary drama about an East-End-er who's more cruel than his pet pitbull. \$35-\$45. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

The Parker Family Circus

Stage vet Rita Gardner (*The Fantasticks*) stars as the matriarch of a Texan family in Jan Buttram's new work. \$19. Tues.-Sat. at 7:30, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 3/3. • Blue Heron Arts Center, 123 E. 24th St. (212-206-1515).

Perfect Crime

This thriller is the longest-running Off Broadway play of all time. \$40. Mon. and Thurs.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 4/5/87. • Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (212-695-3401).

Puppetry of the Penis

An oddly innocent lesson in "the ancient Australian art of genital origami." Two Australian comedians perform penile contortions like "The Hamburger," and "The Windsurfer." \$29.90-\$39.90. Tues.-Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 9:30, Sun. at 7. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Runt of the Litter

Bo Eason's semi-autobiographical solo show tracks the life of a little kid who becomes a very big NFL athlete. \$37.50. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/10. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-206-1515).

Siameses Show con Tola and Maruja

Colombian actors Bernardo Cardona, Carlos Mario Gallego, and Sergio Valencia star in this rambunctious comedy about two sets of twins. Also in repertory at Repertorio Español: *Vieques*, *La Gringa*, *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*, and *Casa Propia*. \$25-\$40. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Center, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Stomp

A boisterous riot of found-object percussion. \$29.50-\$55. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

★ The Syringa Tree

Kate Blumberg plays 28 characters in Pamela Gien's superb solo drama about a young girl coming to terms with life in sixties South Africa. It's a surprising and unpredictable, utterly believable and affecting tale of fam-

Through 4/28. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

★ Homebody/Kabul

In this prescient drama by Tony Kushner, the justly heralded author of *Angels in America*, a London woman becomes obsessed with Afghanistan, and her husband and daughter journey to the country after receiving a report that she has been murdered. Written before September 11, the drama features Dylan Baker and Linda Emond. \$50-\$60. Tues.-Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 1:30. • New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Homecoming

Lauren Weedman, a wry commentator on *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*, returns with her solo comedic show, directed by Maryann Lombardi. \$35. Thurs.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 3/10. • ArcLight Theater, 152 W. 71st St. (212-239-6200).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. A musical revue about heterosexual love. \$49.50-\$60. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 8/1/96. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Iphigenia at Aulis

Agamemnon and his daughter Iphigenia clash in this Euripides classic, directed by the Pearl Theatre's Shepard Sobel. \$28-\$25. Tues. at 7, Thurs.-Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • Theatre 80, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).

★ La Lupe: My Life, My Destiny

Carmen Rivera's successful musical about the salsa star returns, starring Doreen Montalvo. Tuesday performances are in English; all others are in Spanish. \$40. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 6:30, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Love, Janis

An enjoyable new bio-musical based on *Love, Janis* by Joplin's sister Laura and performed by a trio of actresses. Amelia Campbell, Orfeh, and Kristen Lee Kelly star. \$35-\$75. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Village Theater, 158 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

The Matchmaker

Tony winner Anne Manahan (*The Beauty Queen of Leenane*) plays the witty Kerry County matchmaker Dicky Mick Dicky O'Connor, opposite Des Keogh, in John B. Keane's drama. \$35-\$40. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/31. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).

Murdered by the Mob

Interactive off-line entertainment: a mob dinner where

ily love and loss amid the violence of apartheid. \$49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).

Tape

Already adapted into a film directed by Richard Linklater, Stephen Belber's intimate drama about three friends who reunite ten years after their high school graduation returns to the stage. Belber has expanded the drama considerably, and forsaken Hollywood genre for members of its original *Off-Off Broadway* cast. \$25. Tues.–Sat. at 8. • Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding

A wedding and reception, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky. \$75–\$80. Thurs.–Sun. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St., and Winnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Underneath the Lintel

In Glen Berger's new play, subtitled "The Mystery of the Abandoned Trousers," a librarian begins a peculiar investigation after discovering a returned book that is 123 years overdue. \$40. Tues.–Thurs. and Sat. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

★ The Vagina Monologues

Eve Ensler's oral history of a body part stitches together testimony from women from all over the world, from those who have experienced terrible abuse to those who have invented cute nicknames for this play's namesake. Originally a one-woman show, it's now performed by a rotating trio of actresses. Through 3/3: Barbara Barrie, Stefanie Powers, and Lillias White. \$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Off-Off Broadway

Arms and the Man/The Dance of Death

Two productions, in repertory: Ernest Johns directs George Bernard Shaw's wartime comedy and Karen Lordi directs August Strindberg's dark classic. \$15–\$40. Call for schedule. Through 3/28. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

The Bomb

The ambitious International Wow Company (*Hyperreal America*) and director Josh Fox stage a large-cast drama about Oppenheimer, Lacan, the impact of September 11, and more. \$12–\$15. Wed.–Sun. at 8, Sat. at 3. 2/28–3/17. • Flamboyant Theatre, 107 Suffolk St. (212-886-4551).

Previews

Come On Down

Broadway's ablaze with celebrities, but downtown's bustling, too—with shows where the play's the star. Just four years after its initial run, **Shopping and Fucking**, Mark Ravenhill's torrid drama about a coke-head executive and his screwed-up slacker friends, gets a revival with Jay Aubrey and the terrific rising star Susan O'Connor at Theater 22. **Drummer Wanted**, Richard Maxwell's odd tale about a 29-year-old musician who lives at home with his mother, takes over the Performing Garage now that the Wooster Group is frolicking with *Phèdre* in Brooklyn. The International Wow Company, a perennial Fringe favorite, returns with **The Bomb**, a sprawling 35-member production that riffs on global politics, war, and more. And P.S. 122 plays host to **Red Frogs** (featuring Nina Hellman, pictured), Ruth Margraff's satirical take on Aristophanes's *The Frogs*, staged as a burlesque about Coney Island working girls who suffer a disastrous typhoon and stage their own labor revolt. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")

Chocolate in Heat

Betty Shamieh's successful Fringe solo show returns, subtitled "Growing Up Arab in America." \$10. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/21. • Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (212-254-1109).

Circle

Horse Trade stages Suzanne Bachner's bi-coastal comedy about sexpots in Los Angeles and New York. \$10–\$15. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • Kraine Theater, 85 E. 4th St. (212-206-1515).

Cressida Among the Greeks

David Foley's aggressive adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida*. \$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/3. • Ohio Theater, 66 Wooster St. (212-966-4844).

Criss Angel Mindfreak

A futuristic illusion and escape art show. \$15–\$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Fri. at 10, Wed. at 3, Sat. at 2 and 5. • World Underground Theater at WWF New York, Broadway, at 43rd St. (212-307-4100).

Double Agency

Performance artists Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver present two short plays that are each a mix of vaudeville, drag, cabaret, and drama. \$20. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30, Sun. at 2:30. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Dream Star Café

Crystal Field directs a new drama about friends in a Western-themed Illinois bar, by Puerto Rican poet Jack Agüeros. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/3. • Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (212-254-1109).

★ Drummer Wanted

Downtown star Richard Maxwell (*Caveman*, *Boxing 2000*) returns with his latest work, an odd tale about a housebound 29-year-old suburban drummer who lives at home with his mother. \$20. Thurs.–Sun. at 7. • Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. (212-966-3651).

★ The Guys

Anthony Lapaglia and Susan Sarandon now star in first-time playwright Anne Nelson's surprisingly powerful two-person drama about a fire captain who asks a journalist to help him write eulogies for his fallen



men. \$55. Mon.–Thurs. at 7. Through 3/14. • The Flea, 41 White St. (212-206-1515).

Hamlet

Czechoslovak-American Marionette Theater revives its successful 1997 production of the classic. \$10–\$17. Thurs.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 5. Through 3/17. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-206-1515).

Lapis Blue Blood Red

Cathy Caplan's drama about the Italian baroque artist Artemisia Gentileschi coincides with the Met's exhibition of the artist's works. \$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30, Sat. and Sun. at 4. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).

Love Seats for Virginia Woolf

Mia Katigbak and Stephen Nisbet star in Randy Gerner's new drama about Woolf, which complements a furniture-design exhibition in Fort Greene. Free. Call for schedule. Through 3/16. • A: D/B Project Space, 116 Portland Ave., Brooklyn (718-855-9394).

★ Maria del Bosco (Sex & Racing Cars: A Sound Opera)

The latest Richard Foreman production tackles horny ballerinas who fall in love with a race car "that turns out to be human consciousness in disguise." \$15. Tues., Thurs.–Sun. at 8. • Ontological Theater at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-533-4650).

Melancholy Baby!

Ars Nova and Second City Theatricals stage the purportedly "rediscovered" musical adaptation of *Hamlet*. \$15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Through 3/31. • Ars Nova Theater, 511 W. 54th St. (212-977-1700).

Monday Night Magic

Internationally known magicians munch on glass, puncture flailing assistants with swords, steal your watch, yank rabbits from hats, etc., all in an intimate setting. \$29.50–\$32.50. Mon. at 8. • McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-615-6432).

Mono

An inventive, interactive play set in a barlike environment, with a sock puppet. \$10–\$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. • Surf Reality, 172 Allen St. (212-358-3447).

New York Values

Penny Arcade's latest show takes on "the death of Bohemia" in a gentrified neighborhood. \$20. Wed.–Sat. at 8:30. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

Our Town

Jack Cummings III directs Thornton Wilder's 1938 Americana drama. \$15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • Connelly Theater, 220 E. 4th St. (212-206-1515).

Permanent Visitor

A festival of plays celebrating the playwright and novelist Dawn Powell. \$15. Call for schedule. • 78th Street Theatre Lab, 236 W. 78th St. (212-206-1515).

Red Frogs

Coney Island girls unite! Elyse Singer directs Ruth Margraff's new burlesque, a satirical take on Aristophanes's *The Frogs*, in which a typhoon wrecks the strip. \$17. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. 2/28–3/24. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

★ Shopping and Fucking

Mark Ravenhill's torrid 1998 drama about a coke-addicted suit and his screwed-up slacker friends. Susan O'Connor stars, opposite Jay Aubrey. \$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. 2/28–3/24. • Theater 22, 54 W. 22nd St. (212-206-1515).

★ To You, The Birdie! (Phèdre)

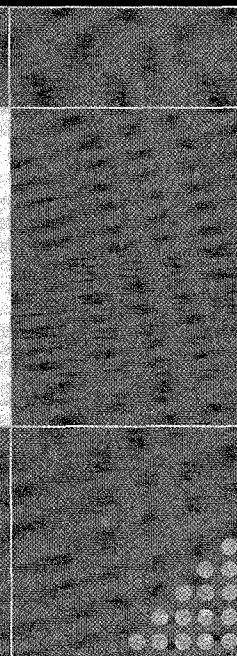
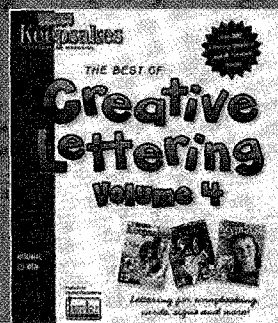
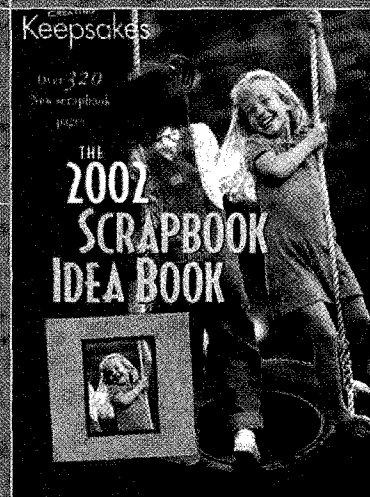
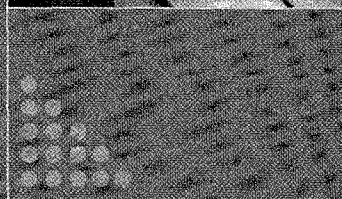
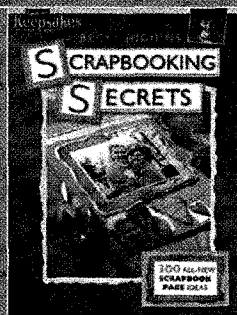
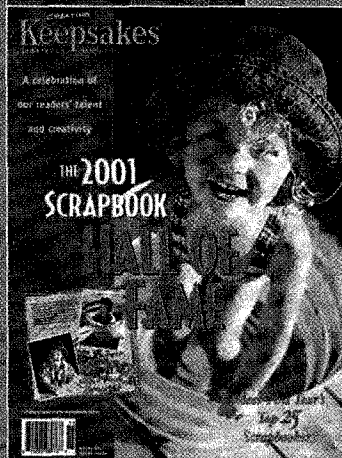
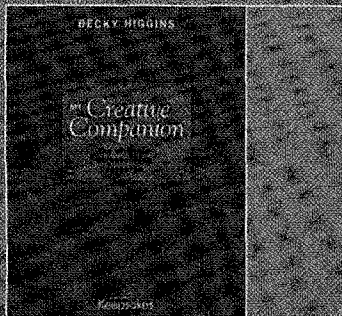
The Wooster Group makes a rare Brooklyn excursion to stage an ambitious adaptation of Racine's *Phèdre*, as translated by Paul Schmidt. The company's ever-inspired regulars, Willem Dafoe and Kate Valk, will join the terrific Frances McDormand to stage a fractured fantasy of a tale in a high-tech environment of digital projections. \$25–\$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. • St. Ann's Warehouse, 38 Water St., Brooklyn (212-966-3651).

Tumor Brainiowicz

Director Brooke O'Hara revives S.I. Witkiewicz's 1920 Polish drama about a mathematician who goes mad, with puppets. \$12–\$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5:30. 2/28–3/10. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Unequalibrium

A new solo show by Alexander Lyras (*desperelics*) introduces a science teacher, a plumber, a laid-off Web designer, and an attorney in a variation on Homer's *Odyssey*. \$30. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. and Mon. at 7. • Gene Frankel Theater, 24 Bond St. (212-462-3107).





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Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Georg Baselitz

Two sculptures from 1994 covered in patterned cloth and a group of watercolors from 1998; through 3/30. • Werner, 4 E. 77th St. (212-988-1623).

★ Walter Beck

Tempera-and-starch paintings of images from nature by an artist (1864–1954) who pioneered the technique of painting on wet starch; through 3/29. • York, 21 E. 65th St. (212-772-9155).

★ Max Beckmann

The first New York exhibition of the artist's sculptures, of which he made only eight, in 35 years, plus a selection of his paintings; through 5/24. • Feigen, 34 E. 69th St. (212-628-0700).

Cecily Brown

Paintings of bucolic landscapes inhabited by amorphous figures and bacchanalian bunnies; through 3/16. • Gagolian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-744-2313).

Bruce Edelstein

Life-size beeswax sculptures of human figures; through 3/16. • Cadé, 1045 Madison Ave. (212-734-3670).

★ David Hockney

Paintings, gouaches, drawings, watercolors, and collages from the artist's personal collection and related to his stage-set and costume designs for the Metropolitan Opera Company's original 1981 production of *Parade*, which is being revived by the Met on March 4; through 3/30. • Gray, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-472-8787).

Robert Morris

A selection of the sculptor's works on paper from the sixties; through 4/4. • Castelli, 59 E. 79th St. (212-249-4470).

Photography

Air Mail

"Drawn" with a backhoe on a large Brazilian mining site and then photographed from a helicopter, **Vik**

Muniz's immense renderings of a spoon, a coat hanger, and other everyday objects (pictured, *Envelope*, 2002) are so rich with references it's hard to keep count—the Nazca drawings of Peru, the Druid drawings of England, Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (and Smithson's aerial photographs of *Spiral Jetty*), and Marcel Duchamp's Readymades all come to mind. But they're also utterly and wittily themselves. At Brent Sikkema, 530 West 22nd Street; through March 16.

57th Street Area

John Baldessari

Two new series by the California conceptual artist in which he juxtaposes movie stills, photographs of "real life" (condominium buildings, seascapes, etcetera), and painted shapes; through 3/30. • Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Kathy Butterly/Nell Blaine

Quirky, colorful ceramic vessels that suggest three-dimensional Pop paintings/Transcendent paintings of flowers made by the artist (1922–1996) at the end of her career; through 3/16. • De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-262-5050).

★ Alexander Calder

Sculptures of cascading forms created by the artist in

1976, the last year of his life; through 3/16. • Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 67th St. (212-421-3292).

★ Bill Jensen/Barry Le Va

Oil tempera paintings made last summer in a village near Siena that reflect the light and landscape of Italy/Ink drawings that explore the relationship between the two-dimensional plane and the three-dimensional volume by discarding traditional order and compositional rules. Through 3/16. • Danese, 41 E. 57th St. (212-223-2227).

★ Loren MacIver

Paintings and drawings from the late thirties and early forties, when the artist was exhibiting at Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York and developing her poetic style of representation of objects drawn from her daily life in New York's Greenwich Village, Cape Cod, and Key West; through 3/23. • Alexandre, 41 E. 57th St. (212-755-2828).

Tim Prentice

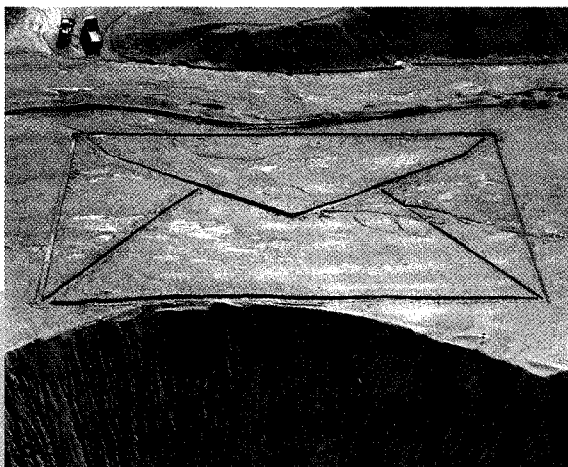
Kinetic sculptures made from translucent Lexan; through 3/16. • Davidson, 441 E. 57th St. (212-759-7555).

Gerhard Richter

A selection of the artist's abstract paintings from the eighties, including two triptychs from 1986, *Fisch* and *Schiff*; through 4/13. • Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-5135).

Esphyr Slobodkina

Assemblages, sculptures, multimedia constructions,



SoHo and TriBeCa

Bryan Crockett

New sculptures; through 3/30. • Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Michael Gregory

Paintings of barns and silos that emphasize their verticality; through 3/16. • Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

Stefana McClure

Minimal monochromatic works on paper that are actually accumulations of film subtitles inscribed onto transfer paper; through 3/23. • 123 Watts, 123 Watts St. (212-219-1482).

★ Jockum Nordström/Martin Kippenberger

Drawings and collages that juxtapose images from the artist's personal experiences and from nature motifs typical to northern Swedish art/Autobiographical drawings that the German artist (1953–1997) made on hotel stationery. Through 3/30. • Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-9074).

★ Irving Petlin

Large-scale pastel drawings on linen that represent the artist's speculations and meditations on Old Testament mythology; through 3/30. • Kent, 67 Prince St. (212-966-4500).

★ Kim Sooja

A Mirror Woman, an installation by a Korean artist who uses mirrors and Korean bedcovers, traditionally used for the newly wedded couple, to comment on love, happiness, wealth, and the illusive quality of these human dreams; through 5/18. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

★ H. C. Westermann

A survey of lithographs made by the sculptor between 1967 and 1972 that depict narratives involving cargo ships, derelict buildings, and diverse characters in wastelands from the Arctic to the Amazon; through 3/30. • Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (212-941-0012).

Chelsea

David Bowes

Decorative allegorical paintings that make multiple references to art history; through 4/3. • Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-741-8695).

★ Saint Clair Cemin

Sculptures that use various styles, materials, and techniques to make witty references to art history; through 3/16. • Cheim & Read, 547

W. 25th St. (212-242-7727).

Mike Cockrill

Large, colorful paintings based on unposed snapshots of the artist's daughter and her friends at play; through 3/23. • Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-229-0044).

★ Amy Cutler

Paintings and drawings of detailed narratives of whimsy and violence enacted by human and animal characters drawn from fairy tales, medieval history, Boy Scout manuals, and other sources; through 3/23. • Tonkonow, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-255-8450).

Brice Dellsberger

Three single-channel video projections that are reconstructions of scenes from popular films; through 3/16. • Team, 527 W. 26th St. (212-279-9219).

★ Joy Episalla

An old couch that the artist has reinvented by removing its upholstery and slicing it into parts, a video recording the "operation," and photographs of the remains of plumbing ripped from a building slated for

Ground Rules

Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations.

Talent

Grouping Show

Paul Henry Ramirez changes the configuration of his vivacious *Elevations Transcendentalistic*, a single but malleable installation of fourteen eight-by-two-foot paintings (pictured, *Elevations Transcendentalistic #7*), when he re-installs it at a new site. The mutable work, which made its debut in the domed rotunda of Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center and travels to the Tang Teaching Museum in Saratoga, New York, this fall, also comprises wall murals that appear to suspend, push, and animate the individual canvases. At Caren Golden Fine Art, 526 West 26th Street; through March 16.

demolition; through 3/23. • Debs, 525 W. 26th St. (212-643-2070).

Margi Geerlinks/Angelina Nasso

Digitally manipulated color photographs of young girls and boys projecting elements of their future physical development/Paintings of imaginary nocturnal landscapes. Through 3/16. • Stux, 529 W. 20th St. (212-352-1600).

Oliver Herring

A new multiple-projection video that utilizes numerous performers, sets, and editing techniques; large-scale sculptural photographic cutouts, and a knitted aerial sculpture that connects the gallery's office and exhibition space; through 3/23. • Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

★ Karen Kilimnik

Paintings and photographs that suggest a dreamy, nostalgic vision of the past, mixing elements of fairy tales, history, myths, and reality; through 3/20. • 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-255-1121).

Win Knowlton

Minimal sculptures on the theme of weather, made with concrete and perforated sheet metal; through 3/30. • Rodgers, 529 W. 20th St. (212-414-9810).

Annika Larsson

Two video works by the Swedish artist, *Dog* (2001) and *Polisi* (2002), each of which use actors, costumes, and music; through 3/23. • Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Steve Mumford

Paintings that investigate the natural world and man's place in it; through 3/16. • Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (212-727-3323).

Vik Muniz

Large-scale photographs of enormous land drawings of common objects created by the artist during a recent stay in southeastern Brazil; through 3/16. • Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

★ Alice Neel/Yayoi Kusama

A selection of the artist's drawings in which she positioned such universal themes as motherhood and death within the sphere of her private life and social consciousness/The first American exhibition of *Solitude of the Earth*, a sculptural installation created in 1994. Through 3/30. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Damián Ortega

Sculptures, photographs, and videos inspired by such everyday objects as toys, golf balls, weeds, pick-axes, and tortillas; through 3/30. • D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

Ellen Phelan

Paintings that continue the artist's blurring of the distinctions between the real and the imagined, this time depicting various sites in the landscape surrounding her Adirondack home on Lake Champlain; through 4/13. • Senior & Shopmaker, 21 E. 26th St. (212-213-6767).

★ Paul Henry Ramirez

"Elevations Transcendentalistic," a site-specific installation of the artist's paintings that was exhibited in the rotunda of the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati last summer and will travel to the Tang Teaching Museum in Saratoga Springs, New York, this fall; through 3/16. • 526 W. 26th St. (212-727-8304).

★ Nancy Spero

Azur, a lyrical 39-section work of collage and original

drawing that covers the gallery's walls in an almost cinematic progression and suggests a voyage through the sky; through 3/16. • Lelong, 528 W. 26th St. (212-315-0470).

John Torreano/Tracy Miller

Panel paintings and "wall balls"/Paintings. Through 3/14. • Feature, 530 W. 25th St. (212-675-7772).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Bookstein

Collages made between 1920 and the present, by Boghosian, Malcolm, Kewley, Rothman, Stella; through 3/16. • Bookstein, 50 E. 78th St. (212-439-9605).

CDS

"Erotica and the Like," sexually themed paintings, drawings, sculptures, and etchings by Balthus, Bellmer, Bonnard, De Kooning, Freud, Graham, Picasso, others; through 3/30. • 76 E. 79th St. (212-772-9555).

Shapolsky

Works by six abstract painters, among them Ilya Bolotowsky, Nastos Daphnis, and Michael Loew, who worked and socialized together; through 4/27. • 152 E. 65th St. (212-452-1094).

★ Ubu

"Behind the Surrealist Curtain: Sex, Sensuality, and Silence," an exhibition of intimately scaled photographs, prints, collages, paintings, and objects by Cornell, Dalí, Duchamp, Magritte, Ubu, and others, curated by Timothy Baum; through 3/16. • 16 E. 78th St. (212-794-4444).

★ Venardos

"Abstractions," paintings by Benin, Cromwell, Hauser; through 3/16. • 1014 Madison Ave. (212-879-5858).

57th Street Area

★ AXA

"Thin Skin: The Fickle Nature of Bubbles, Spheres, and Inflatable Structures," works by Akakçee, Boroson, Byars, the Eameses, Eliasson, Manzoni, Neto, Warhol, others; through 4/13. • 787 Seventh Ave. (212-554-4818), Mon.-Fri. 11-6, Sat. noon-5.

Haime

"From Stone to Foam," sculptures in various materials by Calder, Cragg, Dill, Dubuffet, Horn, others; through 4/6. • 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-3550).

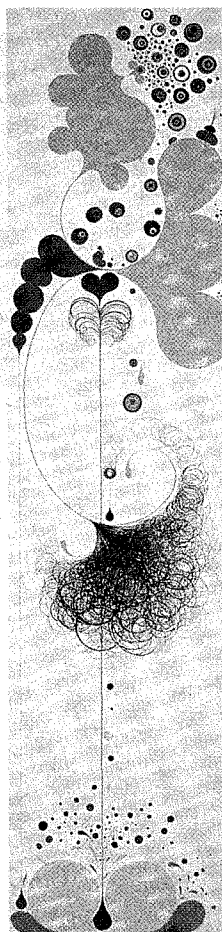
★ Schmidt Bingham

"Connections," paintings by John Cage and Morris Graves, and photographs by Paul Caponigro; through 3/12. • Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-1122).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Exit Art

"Reactions," visual and poetic contributions on 8½-



by-11-inch pieces of paper by more than 900 individuals from around the world capturing how the events of September 11 altered their lives, and original artworks from September 11, two graphic novels of reactions from comic-book writers and artists, the sale of which benefits organizations aiding families of victims of the September 11 tragedy; through 3/30. • 548 Broadway (212-966-7745).

Martos

Works that suggest toys, by Baechler, DeBellevue, Gearon, Koons, Seliger, others; through 3/16. • 515 Broadway (212-343-4293).

★ Ross

"A Return to January, '82: The Corcoran Show Revisited," works by twenty artists who were featured in the Corcoran Gallery's 1982 show "Black Folk in America: 1930-1980," among them Aaron, Dawson, Doyle, Edmondson, Tolliver, Trowler, Yoakum; through 3/16. • 568 Broadway (212-343-2161).

Chelsea

Fischbach

Still-life paintings by Berggruen, Drewa, Dixon, Holland, Kraft, Saunders, others; paintings of American wilderness sites; through 3/16. • 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-759-2345).

Gladstone

Arte Povera sculptures by Anselmo, Fabro, Kounellis, Merz, Zorio, others; through 3/16. • 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Greene Naftali

"Pictures," paintings and photographs by Douglas, Graham, Goldblatt, Orozco, Pfeiffer, Ryman, Snow, others; through 3/23. • 526 W. 26th St. (212-463-7770).

Wimmer

Works that reference Asian culture and traditions, by Bing, Hachiyonagi, Ji, Lee; through 3/17. • 526 W. 26th St. (212-206-0006).

Photography

Lawrence Beck

New color photographs of gardens; through 3/23. • Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. (212-627-1018).

★ Cook

Images of women by women photographers, among them D. Arbus, Beecroft, Cox, Grannan, Kurland, Lee, Mann, Sherman; through 3/30. • 1063 Madison Ave. (212-737-3550).

Jim Cooke

Large-scale color photographs of European landscapes that explore the integration of culture and nature; through 3/16. • Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. (646-230-9610).

Michael Flomen

Large-scale photographs of fireflies' paths; through 3/23. • Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. (212-627-4819).

Neil Folberg

Images of stars, planets, nebulae, and galaxies as seen against details of landscape and architecture; through 3/23. • Klotz/Sirmon, 511 W. 25th St. (212-741-4764).

ICP

"New Histories of Photography 3—The First Snapshots: At Home and Abroad," 60 pioneering Kodak snapshots from the 1880s and 1890s, from the collections of ICP and the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York; through 3/17. • "Foreign Body: Photography and the Prelude to Genetic Modification." A look at the way individuals were portrayed between 1852 and 1945 in medical and scientific photography, portraiture, and popular imagery; through 3/17. • "Another Vietnam: Pictures of the War From the Other Side." An exhibit of more than 120 black-and-white photographs by Vietnamese soldier-photographers, co-organized by ICP and National Geographic; through 3/17. • "Hidden Truths: Bloody Sunday 1972." Photographs by Fulvio Grimaldi, Fred

Hoare, Gilles Peress, Robert White, and others documenting the protest march in Derry, Northern Ireland, in which 13 civilians were killed by British soldiers; through 3/17. • 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (212-857-0045), Tues.-Thurs. 10-5, Fri. 10-8, Sat. and Sun. 10-6; \$8, \$6 students and seniors

Simen Johan

Color photographs of young people in curious situations; through 4/6. • Milo, 552 W. 24th St. (212-414-0370).

Morthland

"Helen Gee: The Limelight Years, Photographs 1954-1961," images by artists who exhibited at the legendary Greenwich Village gallery and coffeehouse, among them Berenice Abbott, Louis Faurer, Robert Frank, and Lisette Model; through 4/13. • 511 W. 25th St. (212-242-7767).

★ Barney Rosset

War photographs taken in China between 1944 and 1945, when the photographer, who was later the owner of Grove Press, was an officer in the U.S. Army Signal Corps Photographic Service; through 3/23. • Gat, 1100 Madison Ave. (212-327-0441).

Silverstein

Rare vintage photographs by the sculptors Constantin Brancusi, Henry Moore, and David Smith; through 3/16. • 504 W. 22nd St. (212-627-3930).

Frank Thiel

Large-scale color photographs documenting the ongoing reconstruction of Berlin; through 3/30. • Kelly, 528 W. 29th St. (212-239-1181).

UBS/PaineWebber

"A Thousand Hounds: A Walk With Dogs Through the History of Photography," images of dogs from the past 150 years, from the book *A Thousand Hounds* (Taschen, 2000), featuring photographs by Erwit, Lartigue, Man Ray, Steichen, Warhol, Wegman, others; through 3/29. • 1285 Sixth Ave. (212-713-2885).

Museums

American Craft Museum

"Milkomegas." Whimsical stickpins by well-known jewelry designers; through 4/28. • "Objects for Use: Handmade by Design." Functional works by 200 artists, among them Aroner, Hotchkiss, McKie, Rice, Teraki, Walden; through 4/28. • 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), daily 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); \$7.50, \$4 students and seniors.

American Folk Art Museum

★ "Danger: The Henry Darger Collection at the American Folk Art Museum." The museum's first presentation of 26 large-scale, rarely seen paintings, plus drawings, original manuscripts, books, and sketches from the artist's archives; through 6/23. • "American Radiance: The Ralph Esmerian Gift to the American Folk Art Museum." Paintings, sculpture, pottery, textiles, furniture, and scrimshaw recently donated to the museum by the folk-art collector; through 6/2. • 45 W. 53rd St. (212-977-7170), Tues.-Sun. 10-6 (Fri. to 8); \$9, \$5 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History

"Pearls." The first exhibition ever presented on pearls, weaving science, art, history, and literature into the story of pearl-forming mollusks; through 4/14. • "The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter." An annual exhibit featuring 400 to 500 live butterflies from Central, South, and North America; through 5/27. • "Meeting God: Elements of Hindu Devotion." A portrait of Hinduism in photographs, devotional objects, and video-portraits; through 3/21. • Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); daily 10-5:45 (on Fri., Rose Center is open to 8:45 for weekly jazz concerts); \$10 suggested contribution, \$7.50 students and seniors, \$6 children.

Asia Society and Museum

"The Creative Eye: New Perspectives on Asia Society's Rockefeller Collection." Selections from the Society's renowned permanent collection; through 4/14. • 725 Park Ave. (212-288-6400), Tues.-Sun. 11-6 (Fri. 11-9, free admission 6-9); \$7, \$5 students and seniors.

Bronx Museum of the Arts

"One Planet Under a Groove: Hip Hop and Contemporary Art." An exhibition exploring the influence

of hip-hop on contemporary art, featuring works by 30 artists based in the United States, Europe, and Japan; through 3/3. • "Context: Recent Art From Cuba in the Permanent Collection"; through 3/3. • 1040 Grand Concourse, the Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. noon-9, Thurs.-Sun. noon-6; \$3, \$2 students and seniors, Wed. free.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

"Jewish Life in Ancient Egypt." Ancient Aramaic papyri revealing Egyptian life during Dynasty 27 (525-402 B.C.), the period of Persian rule in Egypt and the Near East; through 5/12. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000), Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Sat. of every month), Sun. 11-6; \$6, \$3 students and seniors.

China Institute

"Circles of Reflection: The Carter Collection of Chinese Bronze Mirrors." More than 90 mirrors dating from the Warring States period (480-221 B.C.E.) to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), from the Carter Collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art; through 6/2. • 125 E. 65th St. (212-744-8181), Mon., Wed., Fri., 10-5, Tues. and Thurs. 11-8, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; \$3, \$2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution

★ "Russel Wright: Creating American Lifestyle." A retrospective of the American designer's work, including examples of his dinnerware, furniture, appliances, textiles, and interiors; through 3/10. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. noon-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9, free admission); \$8, \$3 students and seniors.

Dahesh Museum of Art

"French Master Drawings From the Collection of Muriel Butkin." An exhibition of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century drawings by François Boucher, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Théodore Géricault, Camille Corot, and others, organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art; through 5/18. • 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (212-759-0606), Tues.-Sat. 11-6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts

★ "Mapping the Studio I (Fat Chance John Cage)." A new large-scale video installation by Bruce Nauman that records the nocturnal activity in the artist's studio of his cat and an infestation of mice during the summer of 2000; through 6/16. • "Alfred Jensen: Concordance." Key paintings by the Guatemalan-born Danish artist, including his final artistic statement, *Great Pyramid*, which is on public exhibition for the first time; through 6/16. • "Jorge Pardo and Gilberto Zorio: *Reverb*." The former's redesign of Dia's bookshop, lobby, and gallery and the latter's *Microfonia*, a sound work first created in 1969; through 6/16. • "Diana Thater: *Knots + Surfaces*." An environment of layered video projections and clustered monitors that interacts with the open space of Dia's third-floor gallery; through 6/16. • 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; \$6, \$3 students and seniors.

Frick Collection

"Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Green-tree Foundation." Paintings by Degas, Manet, Picasso, and Redon; through 4/21. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700), Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; \$10, \$5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery

★ "Seeing and Believing: The Art of Nancy Burson." A survey of more than 100 photographs and multimedia artworks by this artist known for her digitally enhanced composites focusing on the human face; through 4/20. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; \$2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

★ "Norman Rockwell: Pictures for the American People." The most comprehensive exhibit ever assembled of the American artist and illustrator's work, including 70 paintings and all of the 322 covers he created for *The Saturday Evening Post*; through 3/3. • ★ "Brazil: Body and Soul." A survey of artistic production in Brazil from the seventeenth century to the present; through 5/29. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500), Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; admission for Norman Rockwell is \$15; general admission \$12, \$8 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum

"The Emergence of Jewish Artists in Nineteenth-Century Europe." An exhibition focusing on the creativity

of Jewish artists within the context of nineteenth-century art, featuring paintings by Daniel Moritz Oppenheim, Camille Pissarro, Simeon Solomon, and others; through 3/17. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200), Mon., Tues., Wed. 11-5:45; Thurs. 11-8 (Thurs. after 5, pay what you wish), Fri. 11-3, Sun. 10-5:45; \$8, \$5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

★ "Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy." Approximately 50 paintings by the former, a follower of Caravaggio who became court painter to England's Charles II, and 35 by his daughter, the first woman artist known to have supported herself from her work and the subject of two biographical novels and a film; through 5/12. • ★ "Surrealism: Desire Unbound." The first major survey of Surrealism in more than twenty years, featuring more than 300 paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, and films dating from 1924 to more recent years; through 5/12. • ★ "Earthly Bodies: Irving Penn's Nudes, 1949-50." Images of voluptuous nude female torsos that the photographer, then known largely for his work for *Vogue*, made as an antidote to the artifice of fashion magazines (see Whitney Museum of American Art listing for concurrent exhibition of Penn's recent nudes); through 4/21. • ★ "Splendid Isolation: Art of Easter Island." The first American exhibition devoted to the Polynesian art of Easter Island, featuring objects dating from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries; through 8/4. • "Bill Viola: The Quintet of Remembrance." A color-video installation inspired by the artist's study of late-medieval and early-renaissance paintings; through 5/5. • "Benjamin Brecknell Turner: Rural England Through a Victorian Lens." Approximately 40 photographs of the English countryside in the 1850s that depict ruined abbeys and castles, thatched barns, cottages, and other picturesque subjects; through 4/21. • "Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed." Costumes that conform the body to a physical ideal, ranging from a sixteenth-century iron corset to Thierry Mugler's "Motorcycle" bustier; through 3/3. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:30, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; \$10 contribution, \$5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); \$10, \$5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library

★ "Pierre Matisse and His Artists." An exhibition examining the role of the late Pierre Matisse and his former New York gallery, the Pierre Matisse Gallery, through the works of the artists he promoted between 1931 and 1989, among them Balthus, Jean Dubuffet, Loren MacIver, Joan Miro, and Georges Rouault; through 5/19. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. noon-6; \$8, \$6 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art

"Bamana: The Art of Existence in Mali." Sculptures, headdresses, masks, puppets, and other objects made by the Bamana people of Mali; through 3/3. • 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. noon-6; \$5, \$2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of Modern Art

★ "Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting." The first New York retrospective of the German artist's paintings, including 188 canvases completed since 1962 that demonstrate his mastery of such genres as gestural abstraction, landscape, and portraiture; through 5/21. • "Projects 73: Olafur Eliasson—Seeing yourself sensing." An installation that transforms the windows of the museum's Garden Hall into a work of art designed to alter viewers' perceptions; through 5/21. • "Collection Highlights." A selection of modern masterpieces from the museum's permanent collection, including works by Brancusi, Cézanne, Picasso, Pollock, and others; through 5/30. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Thurs., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; \$10, \$6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York

"Brotherhood: In Strength and Sorrow—Images of the FDNY," a photographic tribute to the firefighters who lost their lives in the September 11 tragedy, featuring images from the book of the same title as well as images that have not been previously published;

through 6/2. • *The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge*. Illustrations by Lynd Ward." Illustrations from the 1942 children's book that were recently given to the museum; through 4/28. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; \$5 suggested contribution, \$4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology
 "Red." A look at the symbolic and aesthetic power of red as demonstrated through examples of clothing, accessories, and textiles in every shade of the color, from scarlet to crimson; through 4/20. • "Latin American Fashion: Exploring Identities on the New York Runway." An exhibition showcasing the work of Carolina Herrera, Oscar de la Renta, Isabel Toledo, Narciso Rodriguez, and other Latin American designers, as well as the work of American designers influenced by Latin American design, organized by the graduate students in FIT's Museum Studies: Costume and Textiles program;

at the Tokyo National Museum and the Kyoto National Museum; through 3/2. • "Drawings by Charles Addams: *Unreal Estate*." A selection of drawings by the New Yorker cartoonist, of images ranging from tantalizing conditions in Hell to less than comforting settings of Mother Goose's nursery rhymes; through 6/29. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089), Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free.

New-York Historical Society

★ "Ralph Fasanella's America." A retrospective of paintings by the folk artist and labor activist (1914-1997), a second-generation Italian immigrant who was born New York City; through 7/14. • "Family Matters: Century-Old New York Businesses." Documents and artifacts from ten long-lived New York City firms, among them Modell's Sporting Goods, ArtKraft Strauss Sign Company, and Rambusch Decorating Studios; through 4/28. • "WTC: Monument."

Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian

"Across Borders: Beadwork in Iroquois Life." Beaded pincushions, moccasins, picture frames, and other objects created by Iroquois people; through 5/19. • "Capture: Native Americans and the Photographic Image." Approximately 200 photographs of and by Native Americans, from Frank A. Rinehart's historic images of Geronimo to images of the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890; through 7/21. • 1 Bowling Green (212-514-3712), 10-5 daily, Thurs. 10-8; free.

Studio Museum in Harlem

"Yinka Shonibare." Fabric-covered, life-size mannequin figures and photographic self-portraits by a Nigerian-born, London-based artist whose work explores notions of "high art" and "low art" and "Britishness" and "Africanness"; through 3/31. • "Africaine: Candace Breit, Wangechi Mutu, Tracey Rose, and Fatimah Tuggar." Photo-based works that examine lineages of representations of the African female body by four African artists working in the United States and abroad; through 3/31. • "Race in Digital Space." Works created by 50 artists between the late sixties and the present that use film, video, audio, new media, and web techniques to explore the effects of technoculture on the social constructions of race and ethnicity; through 3/31. • "Collection in Context: Recent Photography Acquisitions." Works by Jules Allen, Dawoud Bey, Gordon Parks, Carrie Mae Weems, and others; through 3/31. • "James VanDerZee." A selection of prints by the Harlem photographer (1886-1983) from the James VanDerZee archive, of which the Studio Museum is the custodian; through 3/31. • 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed., Thurs., Sat., and Sun. noon-6, Fri. noon-8; \$5, \$3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art

★ "Dancer: 1999 Nudes by Irving Penn." An exhibition of the photographer's recent series of nudes of the dancer Alexandra Beller that is concurrent with an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art of his nudes from 1949 and 1950; through 5/12. • 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676), Tues.-Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri. 1-9 (pay what you wish every Fri. 6-9); \$10, \$8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris

"Jane Hammond: Back Stage—Secrets of Scene Painting." A monumental, site-specific painting that fills the back wall of the gallery with a series of overlapping vignettes that depict distinct improvisational performances and theatrical spaces; through 4/5. • "Lucky DeBellevue: Khlysty, the Owls, and the Others." An installation of the artist's humorously low-tech sculptures constructed from chenille pipe-stem cleaners; through 4/5. • 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.-Fri. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's

3/6 at 10 and 2: "The House Sale."

On view from 3/2. • 20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000).

Doyle

2/27 at 10. "Belle Époque: 19th- and 20th-Century Decorative Arts." On view from 2/23. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Sotheby's

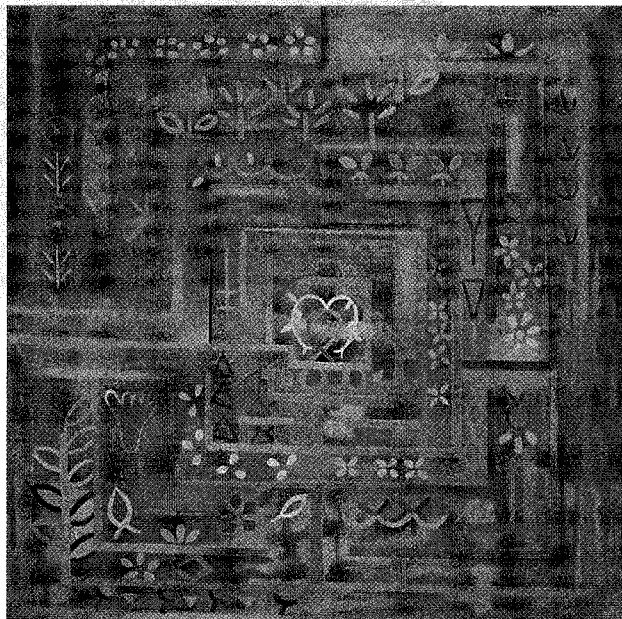
3/2 at 10 and 2: "Finest and Rarest Wines." On view from 2/28. 3/6 at 10:15 and 2: "Watches and Clocks." On view from 3/1. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries

2/28 at 10:30: "Printed and Manuscript African Americana." On view from 2/23. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).

On View Youth and Charm

The painter **Loren MacIver** (1908-1998) once wrote that she aimed to "make something permanent out of the transitory. . . . Certain moments have the gift of revealing the past and foretelling the future." One early MacIver painting, *Red Votive Lights*, included in the Morgan Library's "Pierre Matisse and His Artists" through May 19, does just that. Even better, a concurrent gallery exhibition, "Loren MacIver: The First Matisse Years" (Alexandre Gallery, 41 East 57th Street; through March 23), offers a near-facsimile of MacIver's first exhibition at Matisse's gallery. Both shows are opportunities to experience her impact as a young artist, which was formidable: Alfred Stieglitz wrote a catalogue essay for her first solo show, at the East River Gallery, and by the age of 32, she'd sold a painting to the Museum of Modern Art and had her second solo show, with Matisse. Her unique style was already evident in the luminous images from her everyday life in Cape Cod, Key West, and New York's Greenwich Village (pictured, *Garden Maze*, 1939). As with so many early bloomers, she was self-taught, and by all accounts her art came to her as easily as breathing. "I never thought of painting as a career," she once said. "I cannot tell you how casual it was. I just like to paint." E.N.



3/5-4/13. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. noon-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design

"Architects of the Academy." Watercolors, drawings, floor and site plans, and photographs by architects who were or are Academy members, among them Henry Bacon, Cass Gilbert, Nathaniel Alexander Owings, Edward Stone, and I. M. Pei; through 4/14. • "Modernism & Abstraction: Treasures From the Smithsonian American Art Museum." Works on loan from the Smithsonian by Willem De Kooning, Philip Guston, David Hockney, Ellsworth Kelly, and others; through 4/7. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs. noon-5, Fri. 10-6, Sat. and Sun. 10-5; \$4.50-\$8; students and seniors.

New Museum of Contemporary Art

★ "Wim Delvoye's Cloaca." An elaborate, room-size installation that replicates the human digestive system; through 4/28. • "Marlene Dumas: Name No Names." Eighty figurative works on paper by the Amsterdam-based artist; through 6/2. • "• 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Tue.-Sun. noon-6, Thurs. noon-8 (\$3 admission Thurs. 6-8); \$6, \$3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library

★ "Japanese Treasures: Narrative Hand Scrolls From the Spencer Collection." Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scrolls from the Library's Spencer Collection that recently underwent conservation treatment in studios

An exhibition chronicling the conception, design, construction, and destruction of the World Trade Center through a film, photographs, and the only extant architectural model by Yamasaki Associates; through 5/5. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; \$5, \$3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center

"The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945-1994." A survey of African culture through art, film, photography, graphics, architecture, music, literature, and theater, featuring works by 55 artists from 22 countries; through 5/5. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; \$5 suggested donation.

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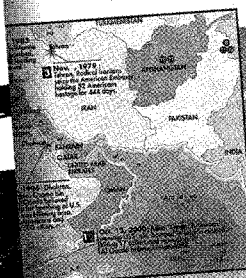
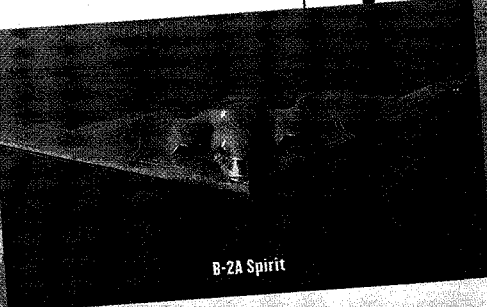
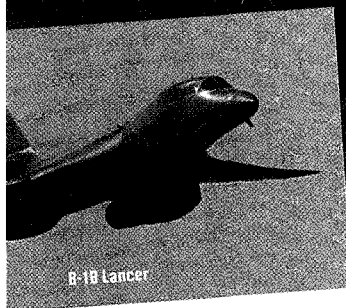
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AMERICA'S NEW WAR

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New and Noteworthy

Bid

You don't have to be a collector to find a compelling reason to visit Sotheby's—not when there's a serious restaurant like Bid just off the lobby. Executive chef Matthew Seeber (hand-picked by consultant Tom Colicchio) serves seasonal Americana like braised lobster with corn relish, sautéed quail with smoked bacon, and roasted lamb with Brin d'Amour. Relish desserts paired with dessert wines, or a house cocktail, and pretense that the rotating artwork is part of your private collection. • 1334 York Ave., at 71st St. (212-988-7730). (E)

Blue Fin

How can you tell you're in a W hotel? The striking design, the Rande Gerber bar, and the upscale restaurant, like this stylish seafood house at the W Times Square. It's smart. It's handsome. Fiercely noisy with jazz to boot. Chef Paul Sale scores with splendid goat-cheese-and-beet salad, a superior crab cake with celery-root salad, and his precise cooking of fish. And Gotham vet Joseph Murphy's chocolate tasting is too good to just taste. • 1567 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-918-1400). (M-E)

Bukhara Grill

At the second branch of a popular midtown restaurant and the fourth Indian kitchen to colonize its raita-ridden block, one whiff is pungent proof that they don't stint on the spices, which permeate the clay-oven specialties, the myriad vegetarian dishes, and everything on the sixteen-course \$13.95 lunch buffet. • 230 E. 58th St. (212-339-0090). (M)

Café Sabarsky

Museum Mile is full of museum cafés, but none quite like this elegant evocation of a Viennese-style kaffeehaus at Ronald Lauder's Neue Galerie New York. The artistic sensibility permeates the café, with its reproductions of Josef Hoffmann scones, Adolf Loos bentwood chairs, and Otto Wagner fabrics. And the theme continues with tortes (Sacher and Linzer), Bavarian ham for breakfast, and cod strudel for lunch. • 1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (212-288-0665). (M)

Institution

Raising the Bar

It's always slightly alarming to hear that an old New York time-capsule classic is undergoing a complete renovation. But patrons of the ultrasophisticated **Bemelmans Bar** at the Carlyle, reopening March 1 after a swanky makeover, needn't worry too much: The baby grand hasn't been displaced by a D.J. booth, nor will Nicky Hilton be dancing on the tables anytime soon. Instead, celebrity designer-architect Thierry Despont has luxed things up, adorning the

newly lengthened bar with fluted mahogany facing and a black granite top and gilding the ceiling. To accompany the new look, bartender and Dale Degroff disciple Audrey Saunders, who wowed us at Beacon, will shake and stir her way through a new cocktail list. And from executive chef Jean-Louis Dumonet's kitchen comes a new French-accented bar menu including homemade foie gras terrine, a lobster club, mini lamb chops, and (in tribute to Ludwig Bemelmans, author of the *Madeline* series and creator of the bar's murals) savory cheese madeleines. (35 East 76th Street; 212-744-1600.)

Calle Nueve

David Ruggerio has done a steakhouse, a brasserie, several fancy French restaurants, and, most recently, a sushi parlor. The man likes to keep busy. His latest project is Calle Nueve, or "Ninth Street," in the newly renovated Marylou's space. The contemporary-Mexican menu ranges from shrimp seiche with roasted cactus to smoky peanut mole with grilled quail. And, for those who miss the boozy late-night scene at Marylou's, frozen margaritas and "tequinis." • 21 W. 9th St. (212-95-0600). (M)

Cipriani Dolci

At the Grand Central outpost of the international empire, there's a train track embedded beneath an inch-and-a-half-thick sheet of glass. There's also tuna tartare, beef carpaccio with the signature Cipriani sauce, Bellinis galore, a "prosciutto tower," and, as the name suggests, plenty of desserts. Plus all-day service, sandwiches and salads, and, come summer, actual air-conditioning—a rarity in that landmarked terminal. • West Balcony, Grand Central Terminal (212-973-0999). (M-E)

★ Commissary

Matthew Kenney (Canteen, Commune) reestablishes his uptown presence with a kitchen that revives some of his signature Mediterranean flavors in dishes like polenta with mascarpone at breakfast (coming soon); panini of prosciutto, pear, blue cheese, and white-truffle honey at lunch; and lamb loin stuffed with goat cheese, mint, dates, and almonds, served with saffron fregula, at dinner. • 1030 Third Ave., at 61st St. (212-339-9955). (E)

★ Hadom

The excellent hummus, homemade pita, plus a com-

Ground Rules

These listings are a selective guide to the city's restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. Stars (★) indicate our critics' recommendations. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive; (M) = moderate; (I) = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where noted; (\$) = cash only; "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted card.

plementary table full of condiments at this terrific Middle Eastern-Israeli restaurant is a meal in itself. But save yourself for some of the dozen or so other salads and specialties like malawach, the warm, buttery, multilayered fried flatbread; and shakshuka, poached eggs in a heavenly tomato stew. Weekends the kitchen puts out first-rate renditions of Shabbat dishes like cholent and jachnun. • 137 Seventh Ave. So. (212-206-7374). (I-M)

★ The Harrison

With its long, bustling bar, commodious beamy interior, and friendly neighborhood vibe, the Red Cat's Jimmy Bradley and Danny Abrams's new hot spot feels like it's been part of the local landscape for years. There are all sorts of dining options—you can spend a week snarfing the spicy fries—but we like the big dishes best: the crispy chicken served on a fat mattress of scallion mashed potatoes, calf's liver smothered in a sweet sherry sauce, and the house shell steak drizzled with crisps of pancetta. • 355 Greenwich St. (212-274-9310). (M)

Impala Cafe

If you've been to Brooklyn's bustling Café LULUc, this place will seem awfully familiar, down to the warm red-and-white color scheme, the magazine racks, and the grilled-chicken sandwich. That's because owner Jean-Claude Iacovelli, patron saint of hungry, thrifty expat Frenchmen, had a hand in LULUc, and he's cloned its all-day bistro-lite formula, beginning with eggs at 8 A.M. and segueing into \$15 steak-frites at night. • 132 W. Houston St. (646-602-1147). (I-M) (\$)

Kai

Downstairs is the Ito En retail shop; upstairs, an elegant restaurant serving food inspired by *kaiseki*, the Japanese meal served after a tea ceremony. And most of the dishes on the à la carte lunch menu and the four-level prix fixe dinner menus (\$55 to \$110) are flavored with the key ingredient: striped bass roasted with tea leaves, green-tea noodles with tofu, and lobster-salmon-and-grapefruit salad with green-tea vinaigrette. • 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (212-988-7277). (E)

★ La Brunette

Williamsburg is overrun with cute little bistros, and this one stands out from the pack with its professional service, an ambience that doesn't strain itself trying to be hip, and a menu that melds Caribbean seasonings and ingredients with French technique. Scotch-bonnet peppers make their fiery presence felt in avocado-and-oxtail terrine, red-snapper tartare, and coq au vin served over a dense mound of mashed plantains. • 300 N. 6th St., Brooklyn (718-384-5800). (I-M)

Luce

This four-month-old, beautifully restored Sixth Avenue bodega may do for that lonely, papardelle-deprived stretch what pioneering Cucina did for Park Slope's now-burgeoning boulevard years ago. Chef Andrew Blackmore-Dobbyn, formerly chef de cuisine at Savoy, has come up with an intriguing Italian-Mediterranean menu: Sicilian seafood couscous, guinea hen with pomegranate sauce, and even a bravely revisionist take on a borough favorite, spaghetti and meatballs—tiny lamb ones, that is. • 411 11th St., Brooklyn (718-768-4698). (M)



Mamá Mexico

At the original uptown branch, it's hard to have a conversation over the margarita-fueled roar. That raucous fate has yet to befall the snazzy new Turtle Bay outpost, with a mezzanine dining room done up in Day-Glo colors and an enormous menu of Mexican standards interspersed with the occasional experiment in Mex-American fusion, like Acapulco-style pasta or the grilled-chicken wrap with pineapple mayo. • 214 E. 49th St. (212-935-1316). (M)

Marseille

Named for the gritty, industrial port city, this Hell's Kitchen kitchen imbues the Film Center Building with a Casablanca-era French-Moroccan feel, replete with tile floor and zinc bar, but no piano. Chef Alex Ureña, late of Blue Hill, traverses the Mediterranean for stuffed zucchini blossoms, mussel bruschetta, rock-shrimp falafel, and the inevitable bouillabaisse. • 630 Ninth Ave., at 44th St. (212-333-3410). (M)

Meet

With a name that plays on its increasingly trendy location, this onetime meat locker is now inhabited by a DJ booth, an illuminated catwalk, ostrich-leather banquettes, coconut-wood tables, and, according to consulting master Tin Sun, fine feng shui. Plus a menu that hits all the right contemporary notes, from brandade ravioli to walnut-crusted rack of lamb. Next door, Meet Café features panini, crostini, and pizzette. • 71-73 Gansevoort St. (212-242-0990). (M-E)

The Minnow

Aaron Bashy grew up in New England and trained at Le Bernardin—two fishy life experiences that pervade his menu at this mostly seafood restaurant he runs with his wife (and pastry chef) Vicki. There's a bit of Ipswich in his fried-fish basket, and a recognition of the excruciatingly finicky New York dining public in his willingness to poach, sauté, grill, or fry any of the day's fresh catch, served with a choice of two sides. • 442 9th St., Brooklyn (718-832-5500). (M)

★ Nam

Nam, with its pale-lemon-and-celadon walls and its illuminated bamboo poles, is a pristine haven just north of the eerie lights of ground zero. Sample wonderful bo bia (soft rice-paper rolls filled with jicama, shrimp, and sweet sausage), luscious shrimp-chicken-and-bean-sprout-filled coconut crêpes, and street-food-inspired thit nuong cuon (lemongrass-beef-and-sesame rice-paper rolls), all lovingly prepared by a trio of talented Vietnamese cooks. • 110 Reade St. (212-267-1777). (I-M)

Negril Village

This downtown duplex, sister restaurant to Negril and Island Spice, has a hundred-seat dining room, a basement bar called Rum Lounge, and a compulsion to prove there's more to Caribbean cooking than beef patties and jerk chicken. Thus, an island mélange of dishes like smoked jerk marlin, tamarind-grilled pork on sugarcane skewers, and "Blue Mountain" steak with coffee-spiked rum and white yams. • 70 W. 3rd St. (212-477-2804). (M-E)

New York Popover

Now that we've all overdosed on pommes frites, crêpes, and empanadas, we're happy to find a new single-specialty-food concept to sink our teeth into. Popovers are those hollow eggy breads that tower over the edge of the muffin tin, and at this Hell's Kitchen storefront, they're stuffed with sweet and savory fillings. In the summer, they'll be the perfect vehicle for homemade gelato. • 789 Ninth Ave., nr. 53rd St. (646-746-0312). (I)

Olica

The sleek space that was formerly L'Actuel has reopened with a rejiggered menu and a new design incorporating sheer fabrics, earth tones, and light fixtures made from New Mexican twigs. Happily, L'Actuel's tart flambée is still available in all its bacony glory, and so are some signature dishes from the owners' first restaurant, the late Destinée, which closed after a fire. • 145 E. 50th St. (212-583-0001). (M-E)

ONLY

This casual Japanese canteen comes to us via the own-



like squid salad with black olives and capers, he's shrewd enough to indulge the comfort-food craze with burgers, steaks, and doughnuts. (75 Greenwich Avenue; 212-366-6004.)

ers of Menchanko-Tei, the noodle-shop chainlet. Only here, the name stands for "Original Noodle for You," and the focus is on customized ramen. Choose your broth and your toppings, and slurp. Or if that takes too much effort, go with one of the chef's specials, like kimchi menchanko, udon or soba noodles, fried calamari rolls, or Japanese-style fried free-range chicken. • 357 Sixth Ave. (212-414-8429). (I-M)

Pulse

Despite the concealed location on the third floor of the Sports Club/LA at Rockefeller Center, overlooking the skating rink, there's no members-only policy—just a health-conscious selection of dishes like sea-scallop wontons with umeboshi plum vinaigrette, a bright and restorative roast pork tenderloin with soba, and crunchy coconut-and-cilantro-crusted salmon with spiced tomatillo jam. • 45 Rockefeller Plaza (212-218-8666). (M)

Q Café

Myriam Córdova, late of the Venezuelan Orinoco, has broadened her culinary horizons while indulging her particular predilection for nut crusts (almond-crusted goat cheese, macadamia-crusted mahimahi) and mangoes (with tuna, with lobster, and in the "mango tango" salad). Her menu reads more trans-tropical than Pan-Latino, except for Sunday brunch, which resurrects Orinoco classics like sweet corn pancakes and pabellón, shredded beef with rice and beans. • 244 E. 79th St. (212-717-6500). (M)

Royal

If Chairman Mao were still laughing, he'd giggle to know there's a slicked-up tablecloth joint on Mott Street touting a "provincial" menu of his favorite dishes. Most everything's larded with torrid red and green peppers to pick out and set aside in hopes of survival... absolutely delicious. And the Hong Kong salt-baked squid are amazing, too. • 1 Mott St. (212-964-9650). (M)

Savoia

One bite of the superlative Neapolitan-style crust at this Carroll Gardens pizzeria demonstrates why the tiled, wood-burning pizza oven is the focal point of the warm, rustic room. But because man and woman can't live by bread alone, no matter how tempting the notion, there's also an extensive assortment of well-dressed salads, carpaccio, salumi and cheese, pasta, and mostly southern Italian entrées. • 277 Smith St., Brooklyn (718-797-2727). (M) (\$)

Smith

Sardines served in the can says it all. Ditto the "nice ordinary name" (as co-owner Brian McNally puts it) and the nobody's-home whitewashed façade. Happily, chef Kenny Addington (Eight Mile Creek, '44; Picholine) really knows how to cook and keeps it clean, as in beet-and-blood-orange salad with goat yogurt, crusted lamb

Opening

NYC & Company

Lesly Bernard, best known for opening hot spots like Pravda and Clementine, brings downtown cred and nightlife connections to NYC, a country-kitchen-quiet remake of what used to be Greenwich Cafe. He and partner Sarid Drory have installed ivory wainscoting, glass cabinets, and—most impressively—Herb Wilson, formerly of Bambou and Jack's Fifth, who will run the newly ambitious kitchen. Wilson's penchant for Greenmarket-inspired ingredients crops up in a harvest of vegetable sides, from roasted carrots with vanilla butter to pepper-and-mint slaw. And while he demonstrates his range, with appetizers

shank with parsnip purée, and an elegant Long Island duck roasted rosy pink. • 64 E. 1st St. (212-260-3189). (M) @SQC

At Avenue, Scott Campbell reacquainted New Yorkers with the often overlooked pleasures of brunch, and now he's brought his rich repertoire of soufflé pancakes, scallion-and-Montrachet scrambled eggs, and pudding-thick hot chocolate thirteen blocks south. Later in the day, there's fragrant stuffed chicken, and an apple tart with caramel and ice cream in three acts that's wondrously good. Ditto frites in parchment. • 270 Columbus Ave., near 72nd St. (212-579-0100). (M)

Théo

From Jonathan Morr of BondSt, Republic, and APT fame comes this bistro and lounge, carved out of an unoccupied corner of the gargantuan UPS building in West SoHo. The menu dips into international comfort-food territory with dishes like crab cocktail with avocado salad, veal osso buco with mushroom risotto, and fish stew with pastis and garlic crostini. • 325 Spring St. (212-414-1344). (M)

★ Via Emilia

After playing it safe for years with a greatest-Italian-hits menu, the chef-owner of the former Trattoria i Pagliacci has returned to his Emilia-Romagna culinary roots. The menu features homemade tortellini and tortelloni, a preponderance of balsamic vinegar, and best of all, gnoccho fritto, a basket of puffy fritters served with great cured meats—street-festival fried dough gone to finishing school. • 240 Park Ave. S., nr. 20th St. (212-505-3072). (I-M)

Manhattan

Lower New York

★ Ajisen Noodle

A lot of ramen around town can be disappointing—overcooked noodles in bland broth. But not at Ajisen. The pork-based house soup—one of three broth bases along with curry and miso—topped with sliced roast pork, scallions, and hard-cooked egg, is rich and satisfying, the whole-wheat noodles tender but firm. Even better is the "tenderous ribs" version, which turns out to be soup with slow-cooked boneless pork ribs. Tenderous indeed. • 14 Mott St. (212-267-9680). (I)

★ Danube

David Bouley's outrageous, lacquered, velvet-swathed little dining room is beautiful, fun, funny, and romantic. And, via his chef de cuisine, Mario Lohninger, the bone-marrow dumplings, the Tyrolean wine soup, the braised beef cheeks, and even the Wiener schnitzel manage to be Austro-Hungarian but not too. The \$21



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lunch is a fabulous undiscovered deal. • 30 Hudson St. (212-791-3771). (E)

Delmonico's

Eat with the Big Boys at this sprawling, beautifully restored New York City icon. Start the feast the way Diamond Jim would have, with oysters Rockefeller and clams Casino, and end it with baked Alaska; in between there's lobster Newburg, rack of lamb, and, of course, the classic Delmonico's steak. And don't forget your jacket—or your wallet. • 56 Beaver St. (212-509-1144). (E)

★ The Mercer Kitchen

Within Christian Liaigre's conversion of a catacomb into a sultry, shadowy quartet of fluid yet diverse sectors, executive chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten reveals how a few ingredients can create flavors that are lucid and compelling. Olive and radicchio join stewed rabbit, mint and coriander ring sea bass carpaccio, tomato soup is spiced by chili pepper and crabmeat. You may be sorry you never sprang for that loft on Spring. • 99 Prince St. (212-966-5454). (E)

NL

NL claims to be the first Dutch restaurant to open in Manhattan since Peter Stuyvesant's time. This may or may not be true, but given the tepid reputation Dutch food has developed over the past 350 years, NL is a minor revelation. The tiny storefront space looks like some clean, modernist precinct of Amsterdam itself. The food's equally well packaged, especially an exotic hare stew, and the herring tartare. • 169 Sullivan St. (212-387-8801). (M)

★ Pico

Chef John Villa (Judson Grill) takes a new old-world approach at Pico, his stylish Portuguese-inspired restaurant in an old Bazzini nut plant in TriBeCa. Proximity to the Hudson befits mostly seafood starters like steamed cockles with fava beans and vinho verde while second courses like spit-roasted suckling pig with a citrus-and-honey glaze marry the rustic with the refined. The blue-and-gold color scheme is not the work of a University of Michigan grad but a tribute to Portugal's ubiquitous palette. • 349 Greenwich St. (212-343-0700). (E)

★ Quartino

All that separates this rustic Italian osteria and wine bar from the South Street Seaport is a few short blocks and one major mind-set. It's all about the good life, Italian-style, which of course involves wine, served by the mini-carafe; delectable cured meats and imported cheeses; pasta; pizza; strong espresso; and convivial conversation. But amazingly, no smoking. The owners may be Italian, but they're also doctors. • 21 Peck Slip (212-349-4433). (I-M)

Raoul's

The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. • 180 Prince St. (212-966-3518). (M)

★ 71 Clinton Fresh Food

Now that wunderkind Wylie Dufresne has decamped to work on his new kitchen across the street, his former sous-chef, Matthew Reguin, steps into the spotlight at this celebrated little restaurant. Signature dishes like parsley-root soup and edamame-crust sea bass seem to be left in capable hands: Before joining the 71 Clinton team, Reguin cooked at Le Cirque and Danube. Expect to see the menu change gradually, with the seasons. • 71 Clinton St. (212-614-6960). (M)

Thom

The new SoHo hotel 60 Thompson has all the boutique accoutrements: interior design by Aero Studio's Thomas O'Brien, uniforms by Nino Cerruti, linens by Frette, and, naturally, its own fashionable restaurant, Thom. Entrées like double-cut lamb chops with peppermint and potato chips, and lobster with fermented black beans, Riesling, taro, and soy beans run \$21 to \$28—a deal, considering that rooms upstairs start at \$370 a night. • 60 Thompson St. (212-219-2000). (E)

Below 14th Street, East

★ Bar Veloce

An early proponent of the tiny Italian sandwich, Bar Veloce squeezes considerable style and substance into a small space where well-crafted panini and tramezzi-

ni are washed down with easy-drinking wines that mostly sell for less than \$10 a glass. • 175 Second Ave. (212-260-3200). (I)

★ Flor's Kitchen

Flor Villazan's family recipes are the South American equivalent of its surrounding neighborhood's Ukrainian comfort food: solid, soulful, and filling. You could easily make a meal of appetizers, like spongy arepas stuffed with chicken or scrambled eggs (or, this being the East Village, tofu and vegetables); Jamaican pattylike empanadas criollas; and the deliciously sweet cachapa, which arrives under a blanket of melting mild white cheese. • 149 First Avenue (212-387-8949). (I)

★ Gotham Bar & Grill

What began with an unfocused menu of Americana in a raucous eighties-style grand café has mellowed over two decades into a trusted classic with Alfred Portale relentlessly pursuing perfection in the kitchen. Settle into a cocoon of confident service—informal but informed, friendly but unintrusive. Then, depending on the season and the market, rediscover Portale's discipline in a lush truffle-oil-perfumed risotto with caramelized sweet turnips, duck confit, and savory cabbage. Or in a rustic and garlicky white-bean soup with floats of rabbit confit and wilted greens. Or in seared yellowfin propped alongside pappardelle rolled around caponata in which each vegetable is like a jewel. • 12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (E)

★ Il Posto Accanto

This is where the same harried crew behind the popular Il Bagatto come to unwind. Literally “the place next door,” Il Posto Accanto is their homey, low-key tribute to Italian wines. Nearly 100 are sold by the bottle, the half-carafe, and the quarter-carafe, which measures about a glass and a half—enough to accompany a cheese plate, a panino, or a

Below 14th Street, West

Alfama

The family-reunion feel of the welcome you receive when you set foot inside this cozy corner of Portugal in the Village sets the mood. And chef Carmen Santos, a onetime fado singer, seals the deal with authentic dishes like a luscious seafood mariscada, codfish soufflé, and an oddly delicious shellfish bread pudding with tiger prawns. Bonus points for an interesting Portuguese wine list and live fado music on Wednesdays. • 551 Hudson St. (212-645-2500). (M-E)

★ Blue Ribbon Bakery

Don't be hoodwinked by what looks like one more brick-walled Village joint that serves brunch. Instead, focus on the intriguing all-over-the-place menu's superb steak tartare, perfectly smoked sable, a butcher's plate to shame most Italian antipasti, a BLT that really is a meal. And can you pass up any place that can still make a root-beer float? • 33 Downing St. (212-337-0404). (M)

Burrito Loco

The house burrito comes with three sauces and a choice of beef, pork, or chicken. There's a rendition stuffed with roasted lamb, another with a chipotle-spiked tomatillo salsa, and lots of vegetarian options. And even though it could probably survive just by serving the hordes of marauding college students na-



Opening No More Fun

Upper East Siders were perplexed last spring when the owners of China Fun closed their bustling Second Avenue branch, only to relocate a block south. But all becomes clear this week when the Wu family, whose dim-sum empire extends to the West Side, opens **Beekman Kitchen**, an American restaurant, bar, and takeout shop, on the old site. Designer Larry Bogdanow has transformed the corner storefront with a glass-and-metal façade, light fixtures made from perforated antique pie plates, and an open kitchen and hearth. Chef-owner Albert Wu (pictured, at left, with co-chefs Derek Hunt and King Phojanakong) plans to use the wood-fired oven for everything from molasses-braised short ribs to clay-pot paella, and he even pays tribute to San Francisco's renowned Zuni Café with a version of its signature dish: herb-roasted chicken with bread salad. Croques monsieurs at lunch, huevos rancheros at brunch—but no dim sum. (1239 Second Avenue, at 65th Street; 212-308-0600.)

rustic crock pot of warm vegetables drizzled with truffle oil. • 190 E. 2nd St. (212-228-3562). (I-M)

Osso Buco

Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M)

Rai Rai Ken

Perhaps even more than they adore soba and udon, the Japanese love ramen noodles. So do impecunious college students, and it will be interesting to see how many undergrads can squeeze into this fourteen-stool noodle bar specializing in ramen and delectable pork-stuffed gyoza (the Japanese answer to the potsticker). Loud slurping isn't only tolerated—it's encouraged. • 214 E. 10th St. (212-477-7030). (I) (\$)

chos and tacos, the festive cantina keeps things interesting with cactus salad and shrimp seiche. • 166 W. 4th St. (212-675-1977). (I-M)

★ Chow Bar

Chef-partner Peter Klein cooked at China Grill and El Teddy's before settling in the West Village, where he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak-frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively crowd, which seems delighted to have found such a fun, quasi-exotic neighborhood place. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)

★ Da Silvano

Few of the fervent regulars—including the city's media, fashion, and art-world elite—seem to recall an Italian restaurant whose menu wasn't sopping in red sauce before Da Silvano. The roasted standing duck is crackling, the lamb tender and moist, the artichoke salad

brash. And not an eggplant-parmigiana hero in sight. • 260 Sixth Ave. (212-982-2343). (M-E)

Jane

Just what every neighborhood needs: a casual spot featuring affordable, creative American fare like fried oysters with creamed corn and red-chili vinegar, hanger steak with Gruyère piroshki, and braised pork with mascarpone polenta. Since entrées max out at \$19, you might feel less guilty splurging on the caramel-banana-cream pie with hazelnut brittle. • 100 W. Houston St. (212-254-7000). (M)

★ Lupa

We love this down-home Roman trattoria and not just for Mario Batali's celebration of odd animal parts and Italian delicatessen, or for partner Joe Bastianich's bid to bring depth and finesse to a casual Village joint's wine service. We like the mood, the food, and the gentle prices, but so do legions of tuned-in New Yorkers. It's almost as tough a sanctum to crack as its pricier sibling, Babbo. • 170 Thompson St. (212-982-5089). (M)

Mirchi

An up-to-date Indian restaurant that takes the street out of street food. The main attraction here is an open kitchen equipped with two *tawas*. The large saucer-shaped griddles that look like cast-iron gongs are used to prepare traditional Indian street food like tak-a-tak, a heavily spiced stir-fry of chopped vegetables and herbs, accessorized with chicken, lamb, or chicken liver, and served like tapas with little KFC-style dinner rolls. • 29 Seventh Ave. So. (212-414-0931). (I-M)

★ Pearl Oyster Bar

Milos may have a fish display as big as this joint's entire counter, but nothing can match this kitchen's preparatory skills. Keep your elbows in and your chin down, all the better to acknowledge a clam chowder revved up with bacon, mussels in mustard cream, and a nutty grilled pompano in herbs. • 18 Cornelia St. (212-691-8211). (M)

Tio Pepe

Can't decide between Mexican and Spanish? This Greenwich Village kitchen has been doling out both for over three decades, and to judge by the liquor supply, the bar's been stocking a new brand of tequila every year. That sort of variety contributes to the general merriment, as do a heaping paella Valenciana and bi-cultural tapas like garlic shrimp and nachos, which many seem to enjoy in the skylit garden room. • 168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I-M)

Villa Mosconi

Traditional Northern Italian home cooking in the heart of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard garden is available for private parties. • 69 MacDougal St. (212-673-0390). (M)

Village

After years of pushing steak-frites at places like Odeon and Quatorze, Stephen Lyle has more than mastered the bistro idiom. To prove it, he opened this instantly chic West Village watering hole, which draws a fabulous crowd tired of trying to remember the way to Pastis. Lyle weaves Asian and Mexican accents in dishes like tuna sashimi with grape leaves and oyster pan roast with chipotles; for more buttoned-down bistro tastes there's steak au poivre and potatoes sautéed in duck fat. • 62 W. 9th St. (212-505-3355). (M)

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Bambou

A hint of the tropics on 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry amid a relaxing, palm-fronded bar and dining room. • 243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M)

Bar 515

International pub grub and hearty American dishes with a touch of Asian and Mexican influences in a lofty, industrial space. Nearsighted sports fans will appreciate the twelve-foot television screen usually tuned in to the game, the match, or the tournament. • 515 Third Ave., nr. 34th St. (212-532-3300). (I-M)

★ Campagna

The far-too-cautious interior is woefully inappropriate preparation for the whoops of joy that erupt when patrons sample Mark Strausman's gleefully game sense of

Italian cuisine. The lobster broth in his cacciucco is a blast. And his grandma's lasagna makes you sorry you never met her. • 24 E. 21st St. (212-460-0900). (E)

★ Chicama

Douglas Rodriguez is so disarmingly inventive that he could serve his spectacular seviches, his drippingly seductive goat stew, and his daunting suckling pig from a lean-to in Union Square, and there'd be no room left for the other vendors. Instead, he inhabits a rustic dream hut that takes you somewhere north of Brazil, east of Mardi Gras, and south of Heaven. • 35 E. 18th St. (212-505-2233). (M-E)

★ Cosette

Everything about this humble 30-seat restaurant is unswervingly Gallic, from the Côtes du Rhône table red to the menu (a Gruyère-crusted brandade de morue, rich onion soup, flaky pissaladière, steak-frites). Everything, that is, except for the host's friendly manner and the West African chef. Cosette is exactly what every neighborhood should be lucky enough to have: an affordable French bistro with consistently well-executed food and a comfortable, low-key atmosphere. • 163 E. 33rd St. (212-889-5489). (M)

★ Eleven Madison Park

While this soaring grand space in the MetLife lobby will never be a room for clandestine assignations, the grace of the staff and big-flavored dishes—capon stuffed with pistachio and garlic, cod with sausage and mustard greens that don't get lost in the landscape—make it a vibrant place to do business and an incredibly sensible choice for the family. • 11 Madison Ave. (212-889-0905). (E)

★ Fleur de Sel

Chef Cyril Renaud wanted his first restaurant to be a personal statement. So he hung his own watercolors, painted the menu covers, and named the place after the highly prized, hand-harvested sea salt that's native to Brittany, just like him. At lunch, the \$20 tasting menu shows off his equally distinctive culinary style in the form of truffle-flecked parsnip soup with chestnut ravioli, and chicken breast with foie gras sauce. • 5 E. 20th St. (212-460-9100). (M-E)

Heartland Brewery

A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café. Accompany your choice of microbrew with stout-battered onion rings, a buffalo burger, or sesame-crusted ahi tuna. The beer-weary can sample from the city's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt scotches. • 35 Union Square W. (212-645-3400). Also, 1285 Sixth Ave., at 51st St. (582-8244). (I-M)

★ Picasso Cafe

Chef-owner Michele Colonna's pizza has cultivated a loyal following including connoisseurs like Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery—and it's no wonder: His pies are superbly charred, ultra-thin-crusted gems arrayed with homemade mozzarella, a mildly sweet tomato sauce, and the perfect ratio of toppings to crust. There's also a growing fan base for his bruschetta heaped with arugula and ripe tomato, hefty sandwiches on freshly baked focaccia, pasta, and entrées like grilled lamb chops. • 43 E. 29th St. (212-696-4488). (I-M)

★ Todd English's Olives NY

Chef Todd English has a genius for artful, HungryMan dishes. He stuffs his pastas with delectable fillings (sweet chestnuts, shredded veal) and slathers them with creamy cheeses. He molds cupolas of foie gras flan, builds pagodas of hanger steak, constructs pill boxes of tuna tartare with crunchy shrimps buried at the base. It's delicious but a little overwhelming, especially if you tag on thrombotic desserts like the peppermint bombe (creamy chocolate with mint syrup inside). The cramped, frenetic space (in the Union Square W Hotel) makes lunchtimes a more restful experience. • 201 Park Ave. So. (212-353-8345). (E)

★ Veritas

Does the wine list make the restaurant? If you've got a chef like Scott Bryan whipping up arctic-char carpaccio with warm fingerling potato salad and a sublime, marrow-and-wine-fortified fillet of beef, it doesn't have to. His elegant American fare (\$68 prix fixe only) complements the cellar, a joint obsession of the owners, who seem to take intense pleasure in sharing their private collection. • 43 E. 20th St. (212-353-3700). (E)

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Arno

Garment District bigwigs and pre-Garden revelers flock to this lively, upscale northern Italian restaurant. Try reliable classics like veal scaloppine and red snapper sautéed with shrimp and clams, garlic, and white wine. • 141 W. 38th St. (212-944-7420). (M-E)

B.B. King's Blues Club & Grill

B.B. King's doesn't pack fans in like anchovies as so many music spots do, and the down-home grub is downright eatable. Indeed, the rock-shrimp popcorn is amazing—hot and greaseless; the pulled-pork sandwich is good enough, as is the tempura-fried calamari; and the Cajun cobb comes with smoked ham, bacon, and deviled eggs as good as Mom's. • 237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144). (M)

Chelsea Bistro & Bar

This friendly bistro became a neighborhood hangout virtually the day it opened. Try the delicious hanger steak and lamb shank, and experiment among the 200-odd wines on the well-chosen list. • 358 W. 23rd St. (212-727-2026). (M) AE, MC, V

★ Mandoo Bar

Mandoo, or Korean dumplings, are the chief attraction at Mandoo Bar, where they're hand-formed in the window by a pair of nimble-fingered women who stop traffic with their engaging labors. We're partial to the steamed kimchi variety, in which the typical pork-and-vegetable stuffing is fortified with tofu and a smidgen of the cuisine-defining pickled cabbage. • 2 West 32nd St. (212-279-3075). (I)

★ Maroons

Ooooh, baby! Do they got attitude. But ooooh, baby! Do they got fried chicken and ribs to die for, pepper-pot soup worth slurping all over your tie, the only fried green tomatoes to ever convince a Yankee why they're worth craving, the most potent, puckering margarita in town, and a red-velvet cake that provides a sugar rush so intense you shouldn't leave the place unescorted. • 244 W. 16th St. (212-206-8640). (M)

★ Periyali

This is the restaurant that first made diners aware that there was more to Greek food than a hunk of lamb on a vertical spit. Periyali took the plates away from Zorba and set them down in a room that exudes the quiet whitewashed, salt-air scented charm of mornings in Mykonos. And while other places have reduced the novelty of combining bouzouki music and class, Periyali's succulent baby chicken, unfussily grilled fish, and uncommonly light moussaka can still surprise and beguile with their cultivated polish. • 35 W. 20th St. (212-463-7890). (M-E)

★ The Red Cat

Not every artist is starving, and the ones with hearty appetites would do well to make this their home away from home among the West Chelsea galleries. Hanging lanterns, barn siding, and artwork contribute to the funky décor, and the bar is the roomy, welcoming sort that solo diners find appealing. The quick sauté of zucchini with toasted almonds is something your mother would never have imagined—a vegetable that could spoil your appetite. • 227 Tenth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-242-1122). (M)

★ Sandwich Planet

Owner Will Brown got his start in the sandwich trade a dozen blocks north with his thriving Island Burgers and Shakes. At Planet, he reprises his boldly seasoned, lavishly garnished chicken churascos and hamburgers but also expands his Island oeuvre to include the kind of two-fisted retro sandwiches—Reubens, cheesesteaks, clubs, and croque-monsieurs—that have been displaced recently by wraps and other raised-pinkie deviations. • 534 Ninth Ave., nr. 39th St. (212-273-9768). (I) (\$)

Slate

Even if pool isn't your game, you might be willing to brave this hall's not exactly tony crowd, giant TVs, and techno throb—not to mention big guys wielding big sticks—for a crack at some delectable comfort food. The big cheese-and-mushroom-stuffed burger alone is worth crossing this cultural divide, and the chewy rare hanger steak is remarkable. • 54 W. 21st St. (212-989-0096). (M)

World Yacht Dining Cruises

Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the “Best of New York” menu: featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill’s Ed Brown and Aquavit’s Marcus Samuelsson among others. Jacket required. • Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E)

Zazen

Zazen is the Zen Buddhist term for “sitting meditation,” and in the evening hours, this undiscovered spot is so quiet you might feel like a practitioner. Underservedly so: The kitchen turns out reliably good Asian fusion fare, like yuan-marinated Chilean sea bass, and moist, thyme-scented teriyaki chicken with spinach spaetzle. At the end of the long room there’s a sushi bar, and up front, easy chairs suitable for an advanced level of meditation. • 29 W. 21st St. (646-230-1461). (M)

43rd–56th Streets, East Side**★ Avra**

Just as they are uptown at sister restaurant Trata, Fulton Street-fresh whole fish are priced by the pound and described on the menu like wines. Barbounia, for example, is a “Mediterranean delicacy that tends to be bony but flavorful.” Elsewhere on the menu, spinach pie goes Gallic as spanakopita napoleon and grape leaves get an unexpected stuffing of raw salmon, tuna, and cucumber. • 141 E. 48th St. (212-759-8550). (M–E)

Divine Bar

This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). Also, 55 Liberty St., second floor (791-9463). (I–M)

★ Kuruma Zushi

Nobu and Bondst might draw celebrity sushi fans, but this is where you’ll find the true fanatics, willing to squander their savings on superlatively fresh sushi and sashimi in nondescript surroundings one flight above a midtown side street. Cognoscenti put themselves and their taste buds in the nimble hands of the sushi chef, who amazes with imported treasures like Japanese aji, sea eel, and prawn-Kuruma ebi. • 7 E. 47th St. (212-317-2802). (E)

★ Maloney & Porcelli

Maloney & Porcelli claims it isn’t a steakhouse, but the

rounded by the spectacular restoration. It’s almost as exciting as sitting courtside. • 23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (E)

Monkey Bar

Many talented chefs have made their way through this kitchen, which, in its latest incarnation under new executive chef David Walzog, is looking back to its all-American roots with entrées like butter-poached Maine lobster, New York strip steak, and seasonal sides like sweet corn succotash and sugar snap peas. David Rockwell’s swanky design and the monkey-murals bar remain unchanged—plush in an Old New York way. • 60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E)

Montparnasse

This space formerly occupied by Mediterranean-flavored Scarabee has gone resolutely Gallic. From country duck terrine and escargots to braised lamb shank and steak-frites, the menu reads like a Parisian-bistro primer. But just in case the food doesn’t get the message across, the décor does, with oversize mirrors, framed French advertising posters, and cozy booths. • 230 E. 51st St. (212-758-6633). (M)

★ Morton’s of Chicago

This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men’s club charm. Hard to believe it’s a chain. • 551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E)

Nino’s Positano

Upscale Italian specializing in food from the south, Positano in particular. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex

slow-roasted duck breast with cantaloupe glaze and polenta. • 151 E. 50th St. (212-753-1144). (M–E)

Smith & Wollensky

Urban cowboys herd together over big steaks with knives to match at impresario Alan Stillman’s signature chophouse. The place has that landmark-steakhouse look—bare oak floors, a raffish air, and bustling waiters wearing service stars. There’s surf and turf aplenty, improvisations at lunch, and an enviable wine cellar. • 797 Third Ave., at 49th St. (212-753-1530). (M–E)

★ Sparks

We wouldn’t be surprised to stumble upon Tony and Carmela Soprano celebrating an anniversary (or an acquittal) on these saloon-like premises, where matter-of-fact waiters wheel carts of precisely aged prime beef up to each table. Management takes personal pride in the wine list. • 210 E. 46th St. (212-687-4855). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side**Adrienne**

Maybe you’re not an out-of-towner on a spending spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hotel restaurant. Chef Oliver Dudler’s modern French menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-expected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a salad with braised mango), foie gras (with beet sorbet), and roasted Colorado rack of lamb. The \$50 prix fixe dinner is a (relative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M–E)

★ Baldoria

Everyone at Frank Pellegrino Jr.’s Baldoria toils to make sure customers stay happy enough to sing along with Jimmy Roselli on the jukebox. There’s luscious veal scallopini, aromatic spaghetti with clams, a raw bar upstairs, and best of all, 136 seats. So, if you still can’t get in to Rao’s—Junior’s father’s legendary celebrity hangout—now you don’t have to. • 249 W. 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

Ben Benson’s Steak House

This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. At a time when steakhouses were famous for rudeness and hauteur, Benson’s made a point of homeyness. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but there’s a weatherproofed “front porch” and a dining room devoted entirely to the assiduous consumption of prime aged beef. • 123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E)

★ Bread From Beirut

Neighboring diamond dealers and a multicultural clientele of Israelis, Turks, Palestinians, Egyptians, and Lebanese have discovered this affordable oasis in the midtown lunch desert. What, exactly, are breads from Beirut? Akin to pizza—they’re round, flat, and delectably topped with za’atar or keshik, a powdery blend of crushed wheat, sesame seeds, and crumbled dry goat cheese. Plus there’s first-rate hummus and baba ghanoush, a succulent chicken

shawarma, and killer kibbeh for takeout or to eat in. • 24 West 45th St. (212-764-1588). (I)

Cité

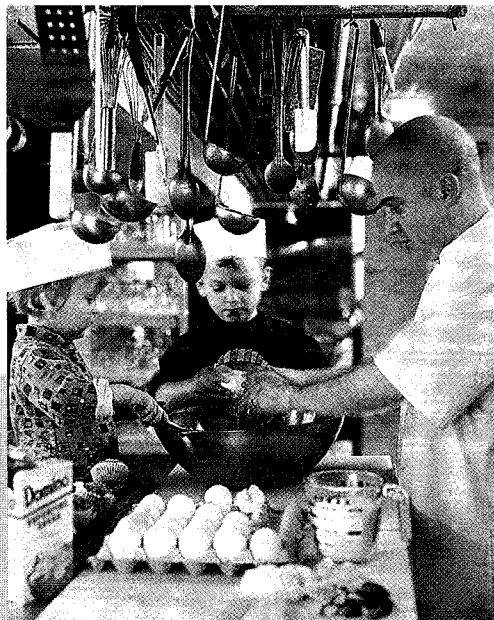
Ambassador of beef Alan Stillman cops a French accent at this soaring midtown steakhouse known for its wine dinners. Meat is just the hard core of the menu, a document that also includes pan-roasted salmon “choucroute,” grilled chicken merguez sausage, and desserts big enough for two or more to share. For more casual dining, try the Cité Grill next door. • 120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E)

Da Rosina

Those with curtains to make and bellies to fill find just what they’re looking for in this Restaurant Row standby, a reliable source for homemade pasta, chicken and veal cutlets every which way, and Italian classics from fried clams to tirami su. A \$22 prix fixe dinner and \$13.95 lunch make it easy to splurge on affordable indulgences like spicy lobster frutti di mare and broiled sirloin steak. • 342 W. 46th St. (212-977-7373). (M)

★ Del Frisco’s

Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone

**Event****Breakfast Club**

Here’s a tip for any parent who’s ever been the recipient of a Mother’s or Father’s Day breakfast-in-bed consisting of Pop-Tarts and Lucky Charms: Send your young Iron Chef off to **The Minnow** for one of Aaron Bashy’s “Little Buddy” Saturday breakfast-cooking classes. Beginning March 2, chef Bashy will familiarize your little Gilligans (ages 4 to 8, and accompanied by Mom or Dad) with bacon-and-egg basics and teach them how to make a streusel-topped coffee cake. The three-part series (\$125, or \$50 for each individual class) gets more ambitious the following two weekends, tackling everything from huevos rancheros to matzo brei. You might say one thing lacking in Bashy’s breakfast primer is instruction on how to mix a proper Bloody Mary or make a mimosa, but you wouldn’t want Junior to turn out like that bad boy Anthony Bourdain, would you? (442 9th Street, Brooklyn; 718-832-5500.)

tide of pinstripe and hunks of food suggest otherwise. The best meat dish, though, isn’t steak but a mammoth “crackling” pork shank—which arrives with a steak knife thrust deep into it—and the service couldn’t be nicer. • 37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E)

★ Michael Jordan’s The Steak House N.Y.C.

If you’re looking for him, he ain’t there. But if you’ve come for great beef, that’s another story. A better slab of New York strip sirloin would be hard to find, no matter which train you board downstairs. And you’re sur-

(Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

One 51

A twenties opera house turned twenty-first-century nightclub, with weekly theme nights like Latin Tuesdays. And should all that dancing make you hungry, the kitchen offers polyglot-American tapas and prix-fixe dinners, incorporating global flavors in everything from “semi-sushi” salmon with wasabi cream and ginger, to

looks like? This is without question the most urbane steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. From the usually overrated filet mignon, whose buttery blandness gets surmounted by a brash pepper-splattered crust, to the superb 26-ounce "double eagle" strip, Del Frisco's is a silverware-clanking crowd pleaser. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E) **District**

At this hotel restaurant, David Rockwell's design makes playful reference to the theater-district locale, and Sam DeMarco's menus make reference to the fun food he popularized at First. For breakfast, there's the Scramble (smoked salmon, cream-cheese fondue, latkes, and dill-caper gremolata). For lunch, "double features" like pierogi with a brisket sandwich. Plus a \$28 pretheater dinner and a late-night "mini-bar." • 130 W. 46th St. (212-485-2999). (M)

★ Esca

Somewhere in between overseeing Babbo and Lupa, taping his shows, and just basking in his own glory, Mario Batali has found time to earn another gastronomic gold star. At Esca, the overachiever in the orange clogs, partner Joe Bastianich, and chef David Pasternack do for Southern Italian seafood what Le Bernardin has done for French: The poured concrete bar with a built-in conduit for ice and oysters is inspired; crudo (think Italian sashimi) is incredibly fresh and of the highest quality; pastas like spaghetti with fresh chiles, mint, and a one-pound lobster are irresistible. And the whole fish for two, roasted in a sea-salt crust is a riveting performance worthy of the theater-district locale. • 402 W. 43rd St. (212-564-7272). (M-E)

Heartland Brewery & Chop House

With hefty hunks of prime aged beef, braised buffalo short ribs, and lobster-and-crab-stuffed ravioli—not to mention a superb artisanal-cheese-and-beer tasting plate—this third branch of the popular brewpub chain is clearly the most culinarily ambitious. But the mood is still mellow, especially at the bar, a rare, comfortable Times Square spot to toss back some of the terrific hand-crafted brews. • 127 W. 43rd St. (646-366-0235). (M-E)

★ La Côte Basque

Decorated with harbor murals of St. Jean de Luz, dark ceiling beams and buttercream walls, the room feels as rich as chef-owner Jean-Jacques Rachou's repertoire: Cassoulet Toulousain. Boeuf Bordelaise. Veal kidneys in mustard. Specialties of the house—anything involving truffles or foie gras—pad the \$65 prix fixe. But who's counting? • 60 W. 55th St. (212-688-6525). (E)

★ Little Yokohama

Customize your soup at this twelve-seat theater-district noodle shop by selecting one of four noodles—a thick udon, a thin udon, soba, or seaweed—or beat the heat with a wonderfully refreshing summer cold-noodle special. Yakko-soba is our idea of the perfect, slurpable pre-theater supper: slick buckwheat noodles adorned with squares of cold tofu, julienned cucumbers, eggs, seaweed, and shaved bonito, in a scallion and ginger dressing (\$8.75). • 374 W. 46th St. (212-315-3161). (I)

Martini's

Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

Oona's Restaurant & Bar

Casual, contemporary American fare in an up-and-coming neighborhood. Creative renditions of seared red snapper, ginger-glazed with bok choy and pickled beets; breast of duck with butternut squash and duck confit; and pizza garnished with figs, mascarpone, and prosciutto. Plus apple martinis and sidewalk dining, weather permitting. • 891 Eighth Ave. at 53rd St. (212-956-6000). (M)

Pierre au Tunnel

Traditional French cuisine, served in thoroughly charming and comfortable surroundings. • 250 W. 47th St. (212-575-1220). (M)

Pig and Whistle

A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. • 165 W. 47th St. (212-302-0112). Also, 922 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (688-4646). (M)

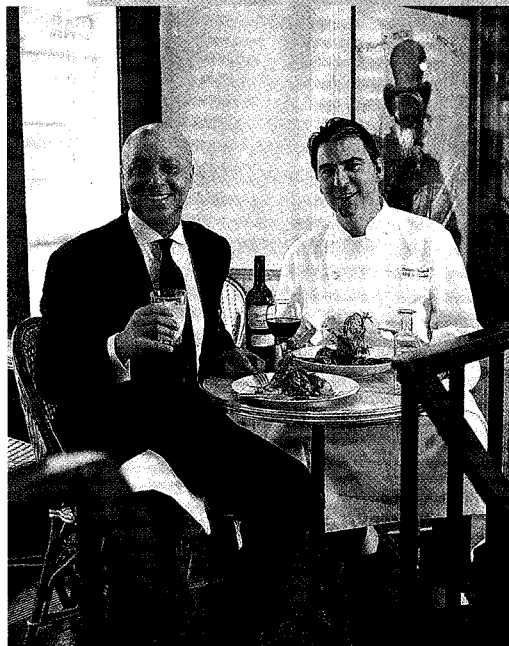
★ Rinconcito Peruano

The seviche at this Peruvian Hell's Kitchen hole-in-the-wall is sublime: tidbits of sea bass, whole shrimp, and squid in an expert lime-juice marinade redolent of garlic, ginger, red onion, cilantro, and pepper. And the caliber of the seviche augurs well for the rest of the menu, which shrinks considerably during the week. (Go on Saturday.) Don't leave without ordering something yellow—one of those national spe-

Talent

So Happy Together

After working together at Chelsea Bistro & Bar, onetime general manager Karim El Sherif and chef Philippe Roussel (pictured) both went off in pursuit of their own fine-dining destinies. Now they've reunited as partners at **Montparnasse**, El Sherif's cozy Turtle Bay bistro, where Roussel has reinvigorated the classic French kitchen and added his trademark flair to dishes like



"smoked to order" salmon steak with horseradish vinaigrette, duck two ways (roasted and confit), and wine-braised chicken casserole. (230 East 51st Street; 212-758-6633.)

cheese course, and the high-concept wine list. The twice-weekly \$65 lunch is, relatively speaking, a steal. • 155 W. 58th St. (212-265-7300). (E)

★ Brooklyn Diner U.S.A.

If this is how owner Shelly Fireman chooses to memorialize the Brooklyn of his youth (which happens to have been spent in the Bronx), we won't complain. It's comfort-food heaven: big portions of exuberantly non-diet Americana like pigs in a blanket and a ham-flecked linguine baked in a too-rich-to-finish sauce that modestly bills itself as macaroni and cheese. • 212 W. 57th St. (212-581-8900). (M)

Caviarteria

If you like to sip Taittinger and nibble caviar by the eighth of an ounce on a whim, this is the place for you. The casually elegant café also offers sampler platters of Sevruga, Ossetra, and Beluga, plus related luxuries like a black-truffle soup, smoked trout from Idaho, salmon from Scotland, and a host of roe-centric sandwiches. • 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-759-7410). (M-E)

The Manhattan Ocean Club

Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics. A pictorial menu features a dozen or so smiley-faced fish. Preparations range from classic (Dover sole meunière) to creative (grouper with roasted pineapple and black peppercorns). Or have the chef prepare your fish any way you like. • 57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E)

ONEc.p.s.

Alan Stillman, along with executive chef David Burke and designer Adam Tihany, has rewired the Plaza's Edwardian Room. Tihany has colored the oaken walls caramel and put huge scarlet lampshades on the chandeliers, and the irrepressible Burke has concocted a whimsical menu that includes a foie gras-spiked burger and a rack of lamb accompanied by shepherd's pie. The mosaic floors and ceiling remain untouched, and the view of Central Park is as grand as ever. • 1 Central Pk. So. (212-583-1111). (E)

★ Shelly's New York

The latest Shelly Fireman production inhabits an old Automat space, ergo the "Horn & Hardart" creamed spinach and macaroni and cheese. Only the assimilative Fireman (of Brooklyn Diner fame) would offer towering shellfish platters and stone crabs flown in daily from Joe's in Miami Beach alongside miso-glazed halibut, chicken schnitzel, and a 50-ounce porterhouse steak cooked "Brooklyn style" and make it all work. • 104 W. 57th St. (212-245-2422). (M-E)

Above 60th Street, East Side

The Boathouse in Central Park

Claim a table by a flowery umbrella on the pondside deck and give thanks to Frederick Olmsted and generations of park champions for preserving this precious greenery. The American menu leans toward fresh seafood like pan-roasted monkfish with spring onions and garlic confit, and seared wild striped bass. • E. 72nd St. and Park Drive N. (212-517-2233). (M-E)

★ Cafe Boulud

Most chefs have one menu to worry about. At Daniel Boulud's beige-on-beige bistro, Andrew Carmellini has four. For "Le Voyage," he globe-trots from Vietnam to New Orleans. Mixing and matching is encouraged, so there's no reason why you can't begin with fresh- and smoked-salmon latkes from "La Saison," segue into potato-crust sea bass from "La Tradition," and conclude with a warm fig tart from the menu called "Le Potager," nirvana for the vegetarian gourmet. • 20 East 76th Street (212-772-2600). (E)

Dalga

Greece isn't the only country with a Mediterranean coast, but it's managed to corner the market on simply prepared seafood. Now, though, Milos and its ilk have competition from Dalga (Turkish for "wave"). A daily assortment of fresh fish, seafood and vegetable stews, and meze like zucchini pancakes and creamy yogurt blended with spinach and walnuts will be a revelation for anyone whose familiarity with Turkish cuisine begins and ends with the doner kebab (a.k.a. gyro). • 401 E. 62nd St. (212-813-1790). (M)

92

With a menu that appeals to Carnegie Hill kids and their parents alike (fish sticks and grilled cheese for the under-12 set, oysters and steak au poivre for those of us feigning more mature appetites), this spiffy newcomer could very well become the neighborhood canteen. The Dreesen's doughnuts will be familiar to anyone who's spent time in the Hamptons, a sure sign of how well owner Ken Aretsky knows his market. • 45 E. 92nd St. (212-828-5300). (M-E)

Nino's

Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

★ Orsay

The new version of *The Exorcist* isn't nearly as chilling as what Jean de Noyer must have gone through ridding the demons from this place. But from the ash of Mortimer's musty chicken hash, Orsay has risen, a brasserie swirling with seductive arches and good cheer, giving the Upper East Side the kind of French tickle it sorely needs. Do you think the former regulars would know the diff? • 1057 Lexington Ave., at 75th St. (212-517-6400). (M)

★ Park Avenue Cafe

A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the neighbors rapt with signature dishes like salmon pastrami with crushed pepper. • 100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E)

★ Pio Pio

Upper East Side fans of juicy, complexly spiced Peruvian rotisserie chicken have reason to raise their Pisco sours. The Queens-based chicken chainlet Pio Pio has moved into the old El Pollo space and brought its own secret spice-rub recipe. Try the "matador combo," a whole supersavory bird with a tableful of side dishes for only a couple bucks more than you'd pay in Queens. • 1746 First Ave., nr. 91st St. (212-426-5800). (I-M)

★ The Post House

How grand can a steakhouse get? If you took a meat-and-potatoes guy who liked to hang out at the Art Student's League, gave him a few years at Princeton, and financed his *Wanderjahr* abroad, he might come home and open the Post House. It's clubby but not snooty, with a Christo here and a Twombly there, and a well-traveled menu that includes everything from a Cajun rib steak to venison osso buco. • 28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E)

Ask Gael

Aren't you sometimes swept away by design?

Guilty. **Mexico Magico** instantly dazzled me with its huge carved Technicolor calendar on one wall, colorful serapes draping the tables, and faux-stone paving walls and ceiling. All in a storefront not much bigger than a postcard. This is a family affair. Walter Certas—three-quarters Mexican, one-quarter Syrian—charms the customers. Wife Lucelia struggles to keep the grub coming. And son Daniel dashes out for groceries or runs off to deliver. They designed the dishes, too. So maybe the food is uneven: watery black-bean soup, fabulous cactus salad, decent guacamole, crunchy flautas. Remarkable mole—wondrously rich and bitter—cloaks a chicken paillard. Prices are gentle, and combo plates are colossal. We loved the vegetarian No. 2: chile

relleno, guacamole tostada, and enchilada with the obligatory rice, beans, and iceberg. I doubt we'd make a long trek just for that mole, but I do love shopping the East 9th boutiques. (438 East 9th Street; 212-477-5522.)



and those lamb shanks—to a neighborhood legendarily short on sophisticated grub. Clearly, he's doing his darnedest to turn the tide with reprises of old favorites like potato, goat cheese, and truffle terrine with transcendent beets; and lusty short rib on an ooze of polenta perfumed with smoked onions. • 2315 Broadway, near 84th St. (212-580-8700). (M-E)

Restaurant 222

Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the \$29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. • 222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E)

★ Ruby Foo's

In what might be Auntie Mame's duplex, the black-bean sauce is vibrant and the wok steamed lobster is worth its weight in jade. And regardless of where you sit, you have to walk down the staircase at least once. Screaming "Live! Live! Live!" is optional. • 2182 Broadway, at 77th St. (212-724-6700). (M)

Scaletta

A dining room decorated in muted blues and pinks is the tranquil setting for refined Northern Italian fare, from smoked salmon and beef carpaccio to a selection of risotto and veal dishes. Conveniently located across the street from those famous dinosaurs at the Museum of Natural History. • 50 W. 77th St. (212-769-9191). (M)

Brooklyn

★ Vaux Bistro

At the more affordable, family-friendly reincarnation of what used to be Vaux, the menu reads rustic French, with daily specials like coq au vin, beef stew, and bouillabaisse (all \$16), plus all the bistro classics we've come to expect: Frisée salad with meaty lardons and hot garlic croutons. Potato-and-leek soup. Terrine de canard. Mussels with first-rate frites. And a chocolate-caramel bread pudding that will make you regret finishing them. • 278 Fifth Ave., nr. 1st St. (718-499-1433). (M)

Queens

★ Sripraphai

A superb Thai kitchen housed inside a nondescript storefront that looks as cheerful as an H&R Block office. But with all due respect to Mets fans, we can't think of a better reason to board the No. 7 train than feeding on crispy dried catfish in a piquant mango, red-onion, cilantro, and chili-pepper salad; fiery beef panang redolent of basil and lemon leaf; and mouthwateringly good minced pork with chilies, peanuts, and lemon juice. • 64-13 39th Ave., Woodside (718-899-9599). (I)

Red Bar

This popular Southampton-spawned canteen launched on the Upper East Side with caviar dreams and a \$34 rack of lamb. Since then, it's wisely (and perhaps involuntarily) instituted a seriously philanthropic \$25 prix fixe, but if you're not pinching pennies, there's still lots of modish and flavorful food to choose from, like fabulous endive salad with Stilton, pears, and hazelnuts; tremulous grilled Atlantic salmon with truffled celery-root puree; and pan-roasted wild striped bass in a fines herbes vinaigrette. • 339 E. 75th St. (212-472-7577). (E)

Sel & Poivre

Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. • 853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M)

Trata

With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood, this bustling Upper East Side restaurant offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. • 1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ Barney Greengrass

A Formica-clad shrine to smoked fish and everything else that defines the dying art of Jewish appetizing. No one's stopping you from ordering cheese blintzes, chopped liver, even caviar. But you're here to savor Barney's raison d'être: the holy trinity of sturgeon, smoked salmon, or Nova scrambled with eggs and onion, with an H&H bagel and cream cheese on the side. • 541 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 86th St. (212-724-4707). (M) (\$)

★ Ouest

After cultivating a coterie of foodie followers at places like Alison on Dominick and Cascabel, Tom Valenti brings his distinctive style of boldly layered flavors—

Classical & Dance

cue

Classical Music

★ New York Philharmonic

Leonard Slatkin conducts Bartók's Romanian Folk Dances and Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 2, with pianist Arcadi Volodos. 2/28-3/2 and 3/4. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); \$21-\$82.

"Esther"

In honor of Purim, the Hebrew libretto of Handel's oratorio has its world premiere, by the Oslo Baroque Soloists and chamber ensemble Il Gardellino, led by Israeli Shalev Ad-El. 2/26-2/27 at 8. • 92nd Street Y, 1350 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); \$50.

★ Philadelphia Orchestra

Performs Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D Major, featuring Vadim Repin, Prokofiev's Overture on Hebrew Themes, and Brahms's First Symphony, led by Robert Abbado. 2/26 at 8. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); \$22-\$89.

★ Emerson String Quartet

Twenty-fifth season continues with Beethoven's

Playhouse at Hunter College, Park Ave. and 68th St. (646-230-8382); \$33.

"Composer Portraits: Julia Wolfe"

Ensemble Sospeso performs a full program of hard-driving, edgy works by the contemporary New York composer. 2/28 at 8. • Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (212-854-7799); \$20.

★ Collegiate Choral

Rare chance to hear stunning soprano Kathleen Battle. Program includes spirituals and works by Mozart, Bellini, Rossini, and Verdi's rousing "Va, Pensiero" from *Nabucco*, with the Orchestra of St. Luke's. 3/1 at 8. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (917-322-2140); \$15-\$75.

★ Boston Philharmonic

See box. 3/2 at 8; 3/4 at 7:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); 3/2: \$21-\$82. 3/4: free (tickets required).

Joseph Kaiser, Baritone

Performs the world premiere of Richard Beaudoin's *Light Verse*, based on poems by John Updike; also works by Weill, Schubert, and others. Kaiser makes his New

Edited by Alicia Zuckerman

Apollinaire, and Colette, premieres 3/4. *War and Peace*, *Rigoletto*, and *Tosca* run, too. Call for details, or visit www.metopera.org. • Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); \$25-\$265.

Amato Opera

Presents Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* (The Elixir of Love). Weekends, 3/1-3/10. Call for details. • Amato Opera, 319 Bowery (212-228-8200); \$28.

New York City Opera

Spring season opens with the Gershwins' *Porgy and Bess*. 3/1-3/3. Call for details, or visit www.nyc-opera.com. • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center, (212-870-5570); \$25-\$98.

★ Opera Orchestra of New York

Eve Queler leads Francesco Cilea's four-act *Adriana Lecouvreur*, about the real-life daughter of a mad hatter who becomes a great actress at the Comédie Française, in concert version. 3/3 at 8. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-799-1982); \$23-\$100.

Talent

A Conductor's Punch

"Everybody in this hotel loves classical music. They just haven't found out about it yet," declared Boston Philharmonic conductor **Benjamin Zander** over tea at the Crowne Plaza last week before receiving the Caring Citizen of the Humanities Award at the U.N. By "everybody in this hotel," he means the entire world; and to that end, the semi-professional orchestra will perform Mahler's Ninth Symphony at Carnegie Hall on Saturday and a free introduction-to-classical-music concert, with explanatory talk, on Monday—the group's gift from Boston to New York. Zander, a great talker, is also a motivational speaker (IBM, Disney, NASA, and the Army have hired him) and has secured his orchestra a fierce cult following; even in the shadow of the Boston Symphony and Pops, Zander talks in aphorisms, mottoes, and imperatives, comparing his scope and purpose to Leonard Bernstein's: bringing music to novices and connoisseurs alike. His energy and passion are undeniably contagious, and like Bernstein, Zander's all about shedding inhibition: grunting, groaning, flailing his arms, and writhing like a human tsunami with an evil-genius laugh. For years he's offered a refund to anyone who can persuade him in person that they were unmoved. "I'm selling a glorious experience in the concert hall, which makes people's eyes shine," he said. "That's the test." He hasn't had to pay up yet. (See "Classical Music.") A.Z.



Dance

Sensendance

Henning Rübsam's company's tenth season features a different guest artist every night, in *The End of Innocence* (a response to September 11), *Ginger: My Story* set to Irving Berlin, and *Listeners Born as Bone* about a fantastical subway ride. 2/25-3/3. • The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-206-1515); \$20.

★ Mark Morris Dance Group

Morris dances in the world premiere of his quartet *Foursome*. Run also features the New York premiere of the fourteen-dancer, four-movement *V*, and the romantic *I Don't Want to Love*, with costumes by Isaac Mizrahi. 2/25, 2/27-3/2 at 7:30, and 3/3 at 3. • Brooklyn Academy of Music, Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718-636-4100); \$20-\$55.

★ Paul Taylor Dance Company

Highlights include the Depression-inspired *Black Tuesday*, premiered by the American Ballet

Theater last year; *Antique Valentine*, a witty look at love and marriage set to music-box Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin; and other repertoire spanning five decades. 2/26-3/10. Call for details. • City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); \$30-\$60.

Trinity Irish Dance Company

Modern step-dancing highlights include Sean Curran's *Jump, Five and Jig*, set in the fifties, in which swing meets step; Mark Howard's *Out of the Woods*, set to Protestant and Catholic drumming; and *Leeson Street*, by former Riverdance principal Kevin McCormack. 2/26-3/3. Call for details. • The Joyce Theater, Eighth Ave. at 19th St. (212-242-0800); \$38.

Donald Byrd/the Group

Presents works from the past decade, with illusions from magician Steve Cuiffo. Highlights are *Jazz Train*; *Not the Shack*, a satirical take on social dancing; and *Drastic Cuts*, about the state of art in the U.S. 3/1-3/17. Call for details. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200); \$10-\$30.

Ground Rules

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

"Razumovsky" Quartets. 2/27 at 8. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); \$50.

★ West German Radio Orchestra Cologne

Makes its U.S. debut with Takemitsu's *Quotation of Dream*, Lutoslawski's *Variations on a Theme by Paganini*, Magnus Lindberg's *Feria*, and Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*. 2/27 at 8. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); \$21-\$79.

★ "Coffee Cantata"

Anthony Newman's Bach Works presents Bach's witty 1732 cantata written in response to the movement to ban women from coffee-drinking. Coffee (and other drinks) served. 2/28 at 7:30. • Café St. Bart's, Park Ave. at 51st St. (212-378-0248); \$15, plus two-drink minimum.

★ New York Festival of Song

Comic novelist P. G. Wodehouse also wrote lyrics and collaborated with Kern, Porter, and the Gershwins. Sylvia McNair, Wodehouse's great-grandson Hal Czalet, and others perform those songs. 2/28 at 8. • Kay

York City Opera debut this season. 3/2 at 8:30. • Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); \$15-\$30.

Adamant Music School

Presents its sixtieth annual Carnegie Hall piano concert by students, faculty, and alumni of the Vermont school. 3/3 at 2:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); \$10.

★ Jubilee Singers of Fisk University

Founded in 1871, much acclaimed African-American choir was recently inducted into the Gospel Hall of Fame. 3/3 at 3. • Schomberg Center, Lenox Ave. and 135th St. (212-865-2890); \$35.

Opera

★ Metropolitan Opera

Le Nozze di Figaro closes 2/28. *Parade*, with music by Satie, Poulenc, and Ravel and inspired by Cocteau,

Concerts

Gorillaz

They're hailed by rock critics—and a surprisingly large number of record buyers—as one of 2001's best, but this concept band (their videos depict them as cartoon characters) feels as empty as the R&B divas who serve as nothing more than vehicles for production maestros. Those looking for innovative soundscapes with soul—and a real sense of humor—might look to the Neptunes' new album instead. 2/28 at 8. • Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171). \$32.

★ Nelly Furtado

Endearing for sure—and that Missy Elliott remix is fantastic—but occasionally the weightless folky style reminds one of Edie Brickell. More B-girl from another planet, less Urban Outfitters multiculti cutie, please. 3/4 at 8. • Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171). \$30.

"Sno-Core Rock"

With Alien Ant Farm; Adema; Fenix TX; Glassjaw; Earshot. A heaping of new rock, thankfully without much hip-hop thrown in. Alien Ant Farm does a herky-jerky cover of Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal" that has an endearingly geeky Devo-ness

Jeffreys. 3/5: Bob Schneider; Mike Errico. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Fez

Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. 2/26: Michael LeMonde; Everett Bradley; Trisha Scotti. 2/27: Tracy Bonham. 3/1: Amy Fairchild; Kenny White. 3/2: Norah Jones. 3/4: Peter Salett; Joe Pernice. • Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Irving Plaza

2/27: Buddy Guy. 2/28: Bebel Gilberto. 3/1: John Scofield Band. 3/5: Starsailor. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

Joe's Pub

2/25: Lea DeLaria; Galt Macdermot. 2/26: Betty. 2/28: Nora York; Justin Bond and the Freudian Slippers. 3/1: Vax Populi; Janita. 3/4-3/5: Bill Frisell. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory

2/25: "Massacre": Fred Frith, Bill Laswell, Charles Heyward. 2/26: Stanley Jordan. 2/28: Sex Mob. 3/1: D.J. Insane; Apani B Fly Emcee. 3/2: The Distillers; Tiger Army; Nekromantix. 3/3: Avail; Hot Rod Circuit; Strike Anywhere. 3/4: Need New Body. 3/5:



Performance Cox Rocks

He may fly to exotic locales on private planes and even find himself helicoptered to a D.J. gig or two, but **Carl Cox** (pictured) has little in common with the pampered superstar spinners who deliver samey sets across the globe. The Manchester-born 39-year-old has, he says, "followed the evolution of beat culture, all the way through disco, hip-hop, house, and techno. Whenever I hear something new and great, I think, *That's disco, but coming back in a new form—I've got to be playing that.*" Indeed, Cox's current dark, techy sound—captured on a soon-to-be-released mixed CD, *Global*—represents yet another direction for a D.J. who has experimented with anthemic dance music (on 1997's *F.A.C.T. 2*) and funk-driven house (on 1998's *The Sound of Ultimate B.A.S.E.*). "I think I've maintained my credibility," Cox says, "by seeing through all the hype over the years. I don't think I've ever jumped on any particular bandwagon." On March 2 at the South Street Seaport, Cox will headline a huge dance party with fellow trend-resistant trailblazer Richie Hawtin, a D.J. whose sets of minimal techno can be every bit as compelling as Cox's more muscular style. (See "Clubs.")

E.B.

to it; Adema is just a mess, the product of a record label (Arista) chasing the tail of nu-metal. 3/2 at 7:00. • Roseland Ballroom, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). \$18.

Small Stages

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill

2/25: "Purim Party" with Soul Farm; The Moshav Band. 2/28: "Mardi Gras in Manhattan" with Papa Grows Funk. 3/1: Delbert McClinton. 3/2: "New Legends of Jazz Guitar" with Eric Krasho; Ronny Jordan; Dave "Fuze" Fiucynski; Rodney Jones; Mark Whitfield. 3/3: "The 3rd Annual Stonys," hosted by Jim Breuer. • 243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line

2/27: Edwin McCain. 3/1: Al Stewart. 3/2: Bruce Cockburn. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom

2/26: Indigo Girls. 2/28: "Max's Kansas City Fund-raiser" with Syl Sylvain; Max's All-Star Band; Garland

Lambchop. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). \$.

Maxor

Mondays in March: "What I Like About Jew Pays Tribute to the Songs of Fiddler on the Roof." 2/28: Peter Stuart. 3/2: Yerba Buena. 3/3: Classical Cafe. • 35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).

Maxwell's

2/27: Kevin Thista's Red Terror. 2/28: F8 featuring Leif Garrett. 3/1: Plug Spark; The Sadies. • 1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge

2/28: Vinyl; Ulu. 3/1: Vinyl; All Mighty Senators. 3/3: Seanna Na. 3/5: Over the Rhine. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

S.O.B.'s

2/25: Cuco Valoy. 2/27: Brian Jackson Band. 2/28: Corey Glover; the Def Jux All-Stars. • 204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).

"Warsaw"

3/1: Blond Redhead. • Polish National Home, 261 Driggs Ave., Brooklyn (toll free, 1-866-468-7619).

Clubs

APT

An apartment-themed lounge with a surprisingly good lineup of hip-hop, soul, and house D.J.'s. Mondays: Bobbito Garcia. Tuesdays: Jaymz Nylon. Wednesdays: *Fader* magazine presents Rich Medina. Thursdays: Small Change. Fridays: Ursula 1000. Saturdays: Chairman Mao and Citizen Kane. • 419 W. 13th St. (212-414-4245).

★ **Carl Cox; Richie Hawtin; Erick Morillo; Hipp-E** 3/2 at 10. • South Street Seaport, Pier 17 (1-800-965-4827 or 212-780-4614). \$40.

Centro-Fly

Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions," with D.J. Erick Morillo and big-name special guests. Fridays: "GBH" hosts some of the more adventurous nights at the club with D.J.'s like Ashley Beedle and Marshall Jefferson. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant"; in the Pinky Room, Chez Music honcho Neil Aline hosts "We and the Music." Sundays: The Chelsea boys sweat out Saturdays toxins at "Drama at Large!" with D.J. Victor Calderone. • 45 W. 21st St. (212-627-7770).

★ Club Shelter

After nearly a decade at Vinyl, deep-house weekly "Shelter" has not only found a new home—it is the new home. The nightclub formerly known as Speed is now Club Shelter, the centerpiece of which will be D.J. Timmy Regisford's soulful, highly eclectic Saturday-night affair. So far unannounced is the remainder of the week's schedule, but no matter—after the club closings of 2001 and the terrorist attacks, New York nightlife desperately needs a dose of the party's good vibes. • Club Shelter, 20 W. 39th St. (212-439-4141). \$.

Discothèque

3/1: D.J. Dove. 3/2: D.J. Jon Cutler. Cutler's "It's Yours" is one of the best things to come out of the mostly moribund house-music culture in a while; its brassy horns and sassy B-girl vocal make it just the sort of thing one might have heard at a block party in the Bronx in the early eighties. • 17 W. 19th St. (212-352-9999). \$25.

Groovejet

Mondays: Rock-and-roll classics, New Wave, and punk with D.J. Tommy. Tuesdays: D.J. Sean O'Shea spins deep house. Wednesdays: Techno upstart David Hollands. Thursdays: "Gallery" with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Drum 'n' bass with "Globesonic." Saturdays: D.J.'s Kimyon, Rich Bourque, and Juan C spin techno and house at "Foundation." • 286 Spring St. (212-929-4780).

Luxx

Fridays: "Mutants" with D.J. Larry Tee. Saturdays: D.J. Larry Tee spins electroclash at "Berliniansburg." Sundays: "House Music Sessions" with D.J. Raji K; D.J. Gomi. Mondays: "Cult Movie Mondays." Tuesdays: D.J. Miss Guy spins rock and metal at "Hell Bent for Brooklyn." • 256 Grand St., Brooklyn (718-599-1000).

The Mint

Fridays: "Spirit of Ibiza." Sundays: Promoter Derek Corley's hip-hop throwdown, which has already seen the likes of Suge Knight pass through its doors. In the Bass Mint: Mondays, drum 'n' bass with Breakbeat Science D.J.'s DB and Dara. • 225 E. Houston St. (212-475-3200).

The Roxy

Saturdays: The Chelsea boys dance all night to a rotating set of house D.J.'s, including Razor of Razor and Guido. • 515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). \$.

Spa

Wednesdays: Rock and roll spun by D.J.'s like Paul Seigny. Thursdays: A-listers and fashionistas take over

Ground Rules In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start later than promised. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations. \$ = cash only.

with "Ultra" featuring hip-hop, house, and rock and roll spun by DJ's Mark Ronson, Lady Bunny, Cameron Douglas. Saturdays: Overdressed Euros line up for "Jet Set" with DJ Eric LaPeau. • 76 E. 13th St. (212-388-1060).

Vinyl

Fridays: "Be Yourself" with progressive-house maestro DJ Danny Tenaglia. Sundays: François K, Joe Clausell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now-legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." • 6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

Jazz

Birdland

In February: Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays, early: The Scott Whitfield Jazz Orchestra; late, Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra featuring Lew Tabackin. Tuesdays, early: David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band; late, The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra. Fridays: Lew Anderson's All-American Big Band. 2/27: Regina Carter Quintet. 2/28-3/2: Tribute to Joe Henderson, featuring Dave Liebman, Craig Handy, Jimmy Greene, tenor saxophones; Don Friedman, piano; Santi Debriano, bass; and Idris Muhammad, drums. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note

2/26-3/3: Ray Baretto. • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

Iridium

Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. 2/26-3/3: Flora Purim and Airtio. Sets Sun.-Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. • 1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121).

★ "Jazz at Lincoln Center presents: Boudoir Tenors"

With Frank Wess, Lew Tabackin, Wayne Escoffery, Stephen Riley, Bill Charlap, Peter Washington, and Kenny Washington. 2/28-3/2 at 8. • Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St., tenth floor (212-721-6500). \$45.

★ "Jazz Insights" presents: "The Music of Duke Ellington"

Music and lecture series hosted by Arnold Jay Smith. Tuesdays from 7:45 to 9:30. 2/26: Milt Grayson. • New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5690). \$35.

Red Blazer

Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz Band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. • 32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).

Rose Center

In February: Norman Hedman's Tropique. The Rose Center is open until 8:45 P.M. Suggested admission price is \$10 for adults, \$7.50 for students and seniors, \$6 for children. Performances take place every Friday from 5:45 to 6:45 and 7:15 to 8:15. • Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100).

Small's

Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for

Performance

Towering Bebel

Once represented by the humdrum acts on the Putumayo label or white ambassadors like Peter Gabriel or Paul Simon, world music has gotten a lot more interesting and diverse recently thanks to acts like Los Amigos Invisibles, Manu Chao, and Brazil's **Bebel Gilberto** (pictured). Gilberto's sweet bossa nova is so enchanting that her label recently released a CD of nothing but electronica remixes of songs from her album *Tanto Tempo*. (And yes, she's João's daughter.) On February 28, she brings her highly melodic, ethereal brand of Brazilian music to Irving Plaza. (See "Small Stages.")

Tribute

Kansas City Chiefs

The polysexual rock acts (Iggy Pop, Jayne County, and the Velvet Underground) that inhabited the legendary late-sixties New York nightspot **Max's Kansas City** has inspired everyone from the Strokes to Hedwig. So when former Max's players like New York Dolls guitarist Syl Sylvain pay tribute to them at the Bowery Ballroom on February 28, the event won't be anything like the staid jams at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. You can even feel good about your debauch the next morning, since it also benefits Mike Quashie, the wild performer who created the limbo craze in the 1960s (and whom Lou Reed considers an icon) but who had a stroke last year and is facing major medical bills. (See "Small Stages.")

a post-Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. • 183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565).

Smoke

Sundays in February: Chris Washburne and Syotos. Mondays: Jam Session with John Farnsworth. Tuesdays: "Hammond B3 Organ Grooves." Wednesdays: Hot Pants Funk Sextet Plus One. Thursdays: Jim Rotondi and David Hazeltine's Electric Band. • 2751 Broadway, at 105th St. (212-864-6662).

Tonic

Sundays: "Klezmer Sundays." 2/27: 101 Crustaceans. 2/28: Charles Gayle Trio. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503).

Village Vanguard

Mondays in February: The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 2/26-3/3: Ray Drummond Quartet. • 178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). \$.

Comedy

Carolines On Broadway

Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 2/25: "An Evening of Laughter and Tribute to Madeline Kahn" with Rober Klein; Nathan Lane; Joy Behar; Peter Boyle; Mario Cantone. \$12.50-\$24.50, two-drink minimum. 2/26: Steve Marshall. 2/26-2/28: TK



Kirkland's "Keep It Gangsta." • 1626 Broadway, nr. 49th St. (212-757-4100).

Comedy Cellar

2/25-3/4: Colin Quinn; Keith Robinson; Godfrey; Nick DiPaolo; Robert Kelly. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Dangerfield's

2/25-3/3: Sam Greenfield; Jim David; Al Ducharme; Rob Magnotti; Rich Ramirez; Gregory Rogell. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.-Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is \$15 Fri. and Sat. (\$20 for 10:30 Sat. show), \$12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. • 1118 First Ave., nr. 61st St. (212-593-1650).

Gotham

2/28: "Comedy Salsa." Every Tues. and Sun.: New Talent Showcase; Wednesdays with Robert Klein. Sun.-Thurs. at 8:30 with a \$10 cover; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 with a \$15 cover. Two-drink minimum. • 34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).

Cabaret

★ Algonquin Hotel

Early shows Tues.-Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat. Through 3/9: Peter Cincotti. • 59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place

Through 3/2: John Barrowman in "Reflections From Broadway." • 450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).

Cafe Carlyle

Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. \$60. 2/26-3/23: David Campbell in "Back From Oz." • Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).

Carnegie Club

Saturdays in February at 8 and 10, Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman with his ten-piece orchestra. • 156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).

Danny's Skylight Room

3/1: Robert Marks Singer. 3/2: Blossom Dearie. 3/3: Edie Stokes. 3/4-3/6: Charles Lindbergh. Showtimes Friday at 7, Saturday at 7 and Sunday at 6:15. • 346 W. 46th St. (212-265-8130).

Don't Tell Mama

In February: Thursdays at 6: Seth's Broadway Chatterbox. Fridays at 8: "The Next Big Broadway Musical!" Fridays at 10:30: Gay and Lesbian Comedy Fest. Saturdays at 8:30: Poole Party Comedy-Variety Show. Saturdays at 11: "Judy Garland Live!" starring Tommy Fernia. • 343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). \$.

Judy's

2/25: "Leer Mondays." 2/27: Donna Mazella. 2/28: Baomi De Cesare. 3/1: Go Mahan. 3/2: Judy Kreston and David Lahm. 3/3: Anthony Gaglione; "Places, Please! The Songs of Francesca Blumenthal." 3/4: Baomi De Cesare. • 169 Eighth Ave., nr. 18th St. (212-929-5410).



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Radio Highlights

Johnny Cash Turns 70

Celebrating the black-clad star's ripe old age, the folk station devotes a day of programming to his dark humor and original sounds. • 2/26, all day. WFUV, 90.7 FM.

College Life Post-September 11

Brian Lehrer broadcasts his show, *On the Line*, live from Queens College, where he talks to students about how the terrorist attacks have changed their lives. • 2/26 at 10 A.M. WNYC, 820 AM and 93.9 FM.

Irony and Dave Eggers on Studio 360

Kurt Andersen invites the wunderkind on to talk about still-living irony and its varied uses, from the Cartoon Network to the indie love songs of Stepin Merritt. • 3/2 at 10 A.M. and 3/3 at 7 P.M. WNYC, 820 AM and 93.9 FM.

Brad Meltzer

The popular author of *The Millionaires* talks to the eponymous host of "The Lewis Burke Frumkes Show." • 3/3 at 8 P.M. WPAT, 930 AM.

Lectures and Panels

"The End of Isolation?"

A Leonard Lopate panel brings together acclaimed authors Sebastian Junger, Mark Bowden, and Amy Wilentz to discuss the challenges of waking America up to distant conflicts. • 2/26 at 7 P.M. Wollman Auditorium, Cooper Union, 51 Astor Pl. (212-334-1660, ext. 107); \$10.

"Waterways of Modernity"

NYU's Margaret Cohen lectures on the history of urban planning, focusing on Baron Haussmann's design of Paris. • 2/26 at 7:30 P.M. NYU's Maison

Française, 16 Washington Mews (212-998-8750); free.

"New York Works" Reception

The individuals whose obsolescent jobs are profiled in WNYC's "New York Works" series—among them a seltzer-maker and a Brooklyn fisherman—meet their fans at an open reception. • 2/27 at 6 P.M. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); free.

Peter Derrick

The Bronx county archivist talks about his book, *Tunneling to the Future*, on the linked development of the New York subway system and the city itself. • 2/27 at 6 P.M. Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672, ext. 257); \$7.

"Is Modernism Still Modern?"

Artists Eric Fischl, Lisa Yuskavage, and Gregory Arnoff join curators Debra Balken and Isabelle Dervaux to discuss the question as it pertains to the visual arts. • 2/28 at 6 P.M. Huntington Room, School of Fine Arts, 5 E. 89th St. (212-369-4880, ext. 225); \$8.

Dave Hickey on Alfred Jensen

Hickey, a professor at the University of Nevada, talks about the life and work of the eclectic artist Alfred Jensen, whose scientifically fixated work is currently on view at Dia. • 2/28 at 6:30 P.M. Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566); \$6.

"Pedestrian" Q&A

Shelley Eshkar and Paul Kaiser, the artists behind the technologically innovative art project currently at Rockefeller Center, talk about their highly original work. • 3/1 at noon. Rockefeller Center, W. 51st St. (212-649-1717); free.

Kevin Karjick on Diamonds

The journalist and author of *Barren Lands: An Epic Search for Diamonds*, gives a talk and slide show about the hunt for North American rocks as part of the New

York City Gem & Mineral Show this weekend. • 3/2 at 1 P.M. Holiday Inn, 440 W. 57th St. (212-678-1942); free.

Rodney Brooks on Robots

The director of MIT's artificial-intelligence lab talks about behavior-based robots—such as "humanoid" machines as Kismet and Cocco—and the philosophical can of worms they open up. • 3/3 at 7:30 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); \$22.

"Isaac Looks at Ishmael"

Dr. Raymond Scheindlin, a professor of medieval Hebrew literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary, investigates the similarities between Jewish and Muslim teachings. • 3/3, 9:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); \$30.

David Tartakover

The Israeli designer and artist, whose posters double as biting political commentary, talks about his life, career, and country. • 3/4 at 6:30 P.M. Wollman Auditorium, Cooper Union, 51 Astor Pl. (212-353-4000); free.

The Written Word

John Steinbeck Turns 100

Two dramatic readings commemorate the centennial. Cherry Jones, Betsy von Furstenberg, and other Broadway personages celebrate by reading from his stories, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and his Nobel Prize speech at a lunchtime event, and the next day stars of the Tony-winning play *The Grapes of Wrath* read from the Library of America's third and final volume of collected Steinbeck works. • 2/26 at noon. Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (212-874-2225); free. 2/27 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 65th St. (212-595-6859); free.

Mario Vargas Llosa

The Peruvian master lectures on "Literature and Life" to inaugurate the Americas Society David Rockefeller New Initiative Endowment. • 2/26 at 6 P.M. Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (212-772-4448); \$25.

Funny Writers

Hip authors Ben Greenman and Sarah Vowell join *The Onion's* head writer, Todd Hanson, and senior editor, Carol Kolb, to talk about being funny and literate at the same time. • 2/26 at 7 P.M. NYU Bobst Library, third floor, 70 Washington Square So. (212-998-2596); free.

Paula Cohen

The author of the historical novel *Gramercy Park* reads from her work and signs copies. • 2/26 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 240 E. 86th St. (212-794-1962); free.

Thane Rosenbaum

The author of *The Golems of Gotham* reads from his work and signs copies. • 2/26 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Dutch Writers in New York

Netherlanders—their best writers, anyway—invade our shores en masse this week. Up-and-comers Oscar van den Boogard and Arnon Grunberg (and later Marcel Möring) read at KGB; elder statesmen Cees Nooteboom and Hugo Claus read at the New School; Margriet de Moor gets interviewed by Neil Gordon at the library, and Henk van Woerden chats with Lawrence Weschler at Housing Works. • Boogard & Grunberg: 2/26 at 7:30 P.M. at KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free. Nooteboom & Claus: The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-990-0855); \$10. De Moor: 2/27 at 6:30 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (212-930-0855); \$10. Van Woerden: 3/1 at 7 P.M. Housing Works, 126 Crosby St. (212-334-3324); free. Möring: 3/1 at 7 P.M. KGB; free.

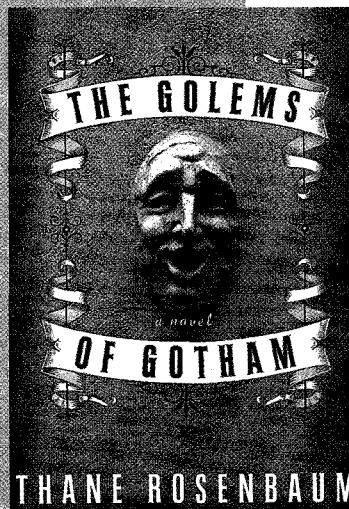
Jay Basu

The author reads from his stand-out novel, *The Stars Can Wait*, and signs copies. • 2/27 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

In Print

Speak, Memory

"I knew that my parents had been someplace unmentionable, but they never spoke about it," says Thane Rosenbaum, author of the post-Holocaust ghost story *The Golems of Gotham*. "This is the folly of parenting. You deprive your children of the essential story, and then they wind up reimagining it." After giving up corporate law in 1992, Rosenbaum—now 42—wrote a short-story collection, *Elijah Visible*, and later a novel, *Second Hand Smoke*, exploring the scars of Holocaust survivors' children like him. "On the one hand, you have this moral imperative to remember," says Rosenbaum. "On the other hand, you have this equally strong imperative to try to live your life." The golems of Rosenbaum's book are the ghosts of eight Holocaust survivors who committed suicide—six of them real-life writers (among them Jerzy Kosinski, Paul Celan, and Primo Levi) who actually did kill themselves. Running riot in millennial Manhattan, they turn the Upper West Side into a shtetl and reclaim the symbols of the Holocaust (stealing the Yankees' pinstripes, ridding New York of smoke). The humor of the novel is balanced against a constant sense of outrage at works like *The Producers* and *Life Is Beautiful* (Rosenbaum, a human-rights professor at Fordham, wrote a piece in the *Los Angeles Times* condemning reckless Holocaust comedy). "The instinct in our species to move forward—we're too good at it," he says. "And I think there have to be golems in our lives that stay back and rein us in." Rosenbaum reads from his new novel February 26 at the Upper West Side Barnes & Noble. (See "The Written Word").

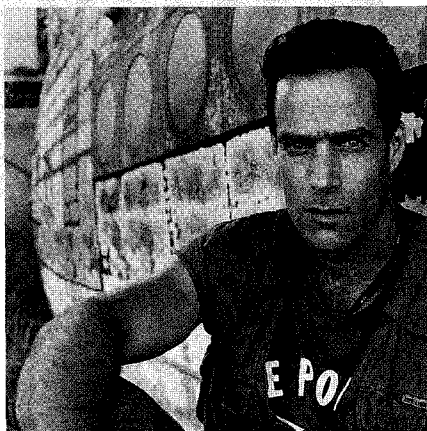


B.K.

Happening

World News Tonight

Terrorist attacks aside, what does it take to make foreign journalism exciting? Movies like *Black Hawk Down* help; so do cowboy writers like Sebastian Junger (pictured), now known as much for holing up with mujaheddin and Kosovar Albanians as for *The Perfect Storm*. Together with *Black Hawk Down* author Mark Bowden and journalist Amy Wilentz—whose recent *Martyrs' Crossing* beautifully fictionalized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—the three reporters talk to radio host Leonard Lopate about what they do best in a panel titled **The End of Isolation? Writing About World Conflicts After September 11th**, at Cooper Union on February 26. (See "Lectures & Panels.")



The News About the News

Robert Kaiser and Leonard Downie Jr., co-authors of the above book on the state of journalism, talk about their work. • 2/28 at 5:30 P.M. Columbia School of Journalism, Broadway at 116th St., third floor (212-854-1754); free.

David Lawrence

The author of *Upheaval From the Abyss* reads from his work. • 2/28 at 7 P.M. The Corner Bookstore, 1313 Madison Ave., at 93rd St. (212-831-3554); free.

Jill Davis

The author of *Girls' Poker Night*, a novel in the "tradition" of Bridget Jones, reads from her work. • 2/28 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

Da Chen

The memoirist reads *Sounds of the River*, a follow-up to his best-selling account of the Cultural Revolution, *Colors of the Mountain*. • 2/28 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Cynthia Heimel

The author of *Sex Tips for Girls* reads from her new book, *Advanced Sex Tips for Girls*. • 2/28 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Ave., at 21st St. (212-727-1227); free.

Luanne Rice

The best-selling writer reads from and signs copies of her book *Safe Harbor*. • 3/1 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 240 E. 86th St. (212-794-1962); free.

David Means

The Pushcart-winning author reads from his story collection *Assorted Fire Events* as it comes out in paperback. • 3/3 at 7 P.M. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Thomas Lynch and Jennifer Michael Hecht

The writers read from their work at this weekly poetry night. • 3/4 at 7:30 P.M. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Special Events

Tours

NoHo and the East Village

A trip through the two neighborhoods focuses on a history as full of contrasts (new immigrants beside exclusive enclaves) as today's downtown. • 3/2 and 3/3 at 2:15 P.M. Call 212-465-3331 for reservations and meeting place; \$12.

Edith Wharton's New York

Kick off Women's History Month with a visit to the writer's Chelsea birthplace, the Madison Square-area church where she was married, and the Gramercy Park that became her novelistic calling card. • 3/3 at 1 P.M. Call 212-415-5500 for reservations and meeting place; \$20.

Benefits

Careers Through Culinary Arts Gala

The program's annual benefit gala offers a sampling of spring menus from 36 local restaurants, and honors Jacques Pépin for his contribution to cooking. • 2/26 at 6 P.M. Abigail Kirsch, Pier 60, Chelsea Piers, West Side Hwy. at 23rd St. (718-279-0331); \$300 to \$1,000.

The Best Food in Queens

It might be worth the trek to Queens for a roundup of food from the best restaurants in the nation's most diverse county at a gala benefiting Queens Cerebral Palsy. • 2/26 at 6:30 P.M. Terrace on the Park, Flushing Meadows Park, Queens (718-380-3000); \$85.

Folksbeine Fund-raiser

The world's longest-running Yiddish theater company hosts a cocktail fund-raiser with Mayor Bloomberg as the guest of honor and legends Seymour Rexite and Mina Bern kicking it old-shul. • 2/4 at 6:30 P.M. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-213-2120); \$300. "Liberty for All"

A gala to benefit the Statue of Liberty, which closed on September 11, includes fireworks over the harbor and appearances by Governor Pataki, Evander Holyfield, and Alec Baldwin at the new downtown hotel. • 2/4 at 7 P.M. Ritz-Carlton Battery Park, 2 West St. (917-790-2417); \$1,000 and up.

Events

Art Expo New York 2002

Besides thousands of works by more than 2,400 artists, the 24th annual fair also exhibits children's art related to September 11 from P.S. 134. • 3/2 from 10 A.M. to 7 P.M., 3/3 from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M., 3/4 from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. Jacob Javits Convention Center, 665 W. 34th St. (888-322-5226); \$12.

Triple Pier Antiques Show

New York's largest antiques show—with more than 600 different exhibits this weekend and just as many next weekend—proffers everything from Colonial Americana to Asian crafts; each pier holds a different category. • 3/2 and 3/3, hours vary by day and pier, all open between 11 A.M. and 5 P.M. Passenger Terminal Piers 88, 90, and 92 on Twelfth Ave. bet. 48th and 55th Sts. (212-255-0020); \$12.

Sports

USA Indoor Track & Field Championships

In 1993, after 88 years at the world's fastest indoor track—which launched the careers of Jesse Owens and Flojo—the world's oldest indoor track championships dumped the Armory for Atlanta. This year, USA returns for good, as high-school national champions are crowned and paraded before college scouts. • 3/1 from 10 A.M. to 9 P.M. and 3/2 from 11 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. Armory Track & Field Center, 216 Fort Washington Ave., at 168th St. (212-307-7171); \$30, \$20 per day at door; \$50, \$35 per day reserved.

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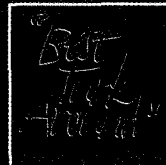
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Edited by Susan Avery

Children's Events

Kids on Film

All types on screen, all geared toward youngsters. (See box.) • New York International Children's Film Festival; 3/1-3/31; various locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn (866-468-7619 or www.gkids.com); \$6-\$15 per screening. Brooklyn Academy of Music BAMKids Film Festival; 3/9-3/10; Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100 or www.bam.org); \$9 grown-ups, \$6 kids 13 and younger per screening.

Women's Work

Is it ever done? Learn how the early Dutch settlers took care of their Brooklyn households. Make Dutch-style waffles and dye linens over an open fire (with grown-up supervision). A Dutch descendant talks about her own family history. • 3/3 from noon to 3 P.M.; Wyckoff House Museum, 5816 Clarendon Rd., Brooklyn (718-629-5400); free.

First Steps

Get those slippers ready for New York Theatre Ballet's new interactive production, *The Magic of Dance*. Kids will learn basic ballet movements from the company and then watch the condensed versions of *Firebird* and *Carpet of Jewels*. Everyone receives a take-home gift bag of props and goodies before the show. • 3/1 at 10:30 A.M., 1 and 7 P.M., 3/2-3/3 at 11 A.M., 1 and 3:30 P.M.; Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160); \$25 grown-ups, \$20 kids 12 and younger.

A Kinder, Gentler Br'er

Tales of Br'er Rabbit have inspired debate about prejudice. This multicultural adaptation reinvents the stories—which were originally oral tales captured by a

newspaper columnist of the nineteenth century—with an urban blues score while maintaining the fable of a rabbit who uses his wits and speed to survive. • Through 3/10; Henry Street Settlement, Abrons Arts Center, 466 Grand St. (212-598-0400); \$10 grown-ups, \$5 kids.

Majestic Classics

Miss Majesty's Lollipop Playhouse in the Village always has something going on that's warm and fuzzy . . . and funny. This week, writer-director Marilyn Majeski opens *Alice in Wonderland* and *Pinocchio*. She calls them "audience participation comedies, so talking to the actors during the performance is not only allowed, it's strongly encouraged." • Saturdays and Sundays 3/2-4/21; *Alice in Wonderland* at 1:30, *Pinocchio* at 3:30 P.M.; Miss Majesty's Lollipop Playhouse, Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. (212-741-6436); \$8.50.

Bad Things Get Better

Tale of Teeka is a one-hour play about a boy and his goose that traces the emotional journey of a mistreated child who transcends his difficult circumstances through the friendship of his wise pet. Recommended for kids 10 and older. • 3/2 at 2 P.M.; BAM Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn (718-636-4100 or www.bam.org); \$10.

Good Bull

Life-size puppets take to the stage at Arts Connection in the enchanting ballet *Ferdinand the Bull*, about the snouted one who just wouldn't fight. From Hudson Vagabond Puppets. • 3/2 at 11 A.M.; Arts Connection, 120 W. 46th St. (212-302-7433 or www.artsconnection.org); \$6.

Landing Party

Find a stone and discover the world. Kids will see how ice, wind, and other natural forces, including people, have formed the topography of Wave Hill. Sculpt your own mini-landscape with rocks, clay, and other natural materials. • 3/2-3/3 from 1 to 4 P.M.; Wave Hill, Kerlin Learning Center, Independence Ave. and 249th St., the Bronx (718-549-3200 or www.wavehill.org); free.

Onscreen

Child Stars

In the opening of the documentary film *Dead Men Do Tell Tales*, the narrator steps from behind a gravestone and begins a gripping description of ancient mummification techniques

and their legacy. For the next ten minutes, this documentary boils down historical and medical footage, in-depth interviews, and a wealth of research to explain the process. Fine. But did we mention that the reporter-writer-editor-director, Preston Burger, is a teenager, and that the film was merely a homework assignment at his Massapequa school? Burger has been making films since he was 9 and shot his mummy movie at 13; now, as a mature 16-year-old, he's headed to its New York premiere during March's **New York International Children's Film Festival**, along with 51 other full-length features, foreign films, shorts, animations, and documentaries for kids 3 to 18. (Pictured, a scene from Mark Lewis's *The Natural History of the Chicken*.) Opening night is Disney's *Snow White*, along with two alternative versions, one of which includes Betty Boop. The weekend of March 9 will bring competition for audiences, as the Brooklyn Academy of Music holds its annual **BAMkids Film Festival**, featuring another 40 pieces. One particular short, *Low Down Underground*, is an unusual story of a subway friendship, set to rap; the littlest kids will love *Little Miss Spider* (the beloved book, now computer-animated and narrated by Susan Sarandon), or the illustrated cartoon *Is Your Mama a Llama?* Sign up early to avoid those dreaded words: sold out. (See "Children's Events.")

S.A.

WOLFF Continued from page 21

and seek to be part of it (media people are most often late getting to the Zeitgeist, so when they do finally get to it, they doubly embrace it). A recent example was the Davos conference, the Woodstock of the business culture, held last month in New York (after having been expelled from Davos, Switzerland). Lavish media attention was given to the conference (the *Time* treated it like a major-political-party convention), which almost everybody acknowledged was a bust, because by almost everyone's admission, if you don't say nice things, you don't get invited back. And to be invited and then to be invited back is, as they say in business, a "cash equivalent." We're all on the take.

Every sin of omission and commission—supported by those relentless press releases—was committed as much by the media as by any other business. The media became a prime participant and its managers (if not necessarily its shareholders) key beneficiaries of the business culture. Indeed, the media, as much or more than any other business, has tied itself into a spreadsheet-induced knot of debt and consolidation and surreal accounting practices.

Of course, reporters, editors, producers, and correspondents are righteous about not being business-culture stooges (Time Inc.-ers are always saying, *Of course we can write about AOL Time Warner*). But try calling up media biggies to get them to talk to you about their own companies, and then it's P.R. people and communications people and public-affairs people up the wazoo.

This is another key feature of the business culture—nobody is allowed to talk. If you say anything, you're fired. Worse, if you say anything, you're fired and your severance is gone. Indeed, even if you are fired you've signed all sorts of nondisclosure and mutual-nondisparagement clauses.

And since nobody's really outside the business culture anymore, this effectively means we're all muzzled.

THE FASCINATION WITH THE COLLAPSE OF ENRON and Global Crossing and, I suspect, many other corporations to follow is the sense that there is something larger going on than just a ridiculous excuse for a company coming undone. We all sense the culture might be cracking open. And we're game for it: because the market crapped out, because we all think we're going to lose our jobs anyway, and because we all want some blood.

And because we all feel a little guilty. ■

E-mail: michael@burnrate.com. Visit Michael Wolff's archive at newyorkmetro.com/archive/wolff.



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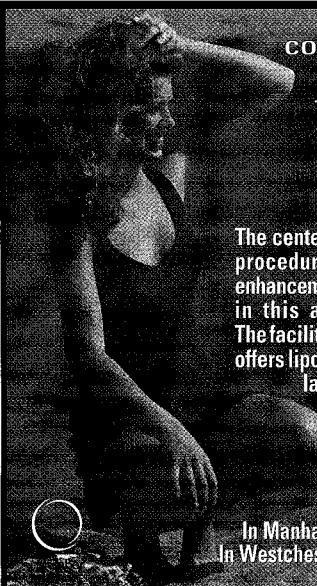
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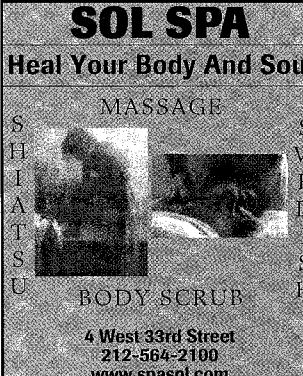
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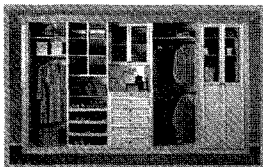
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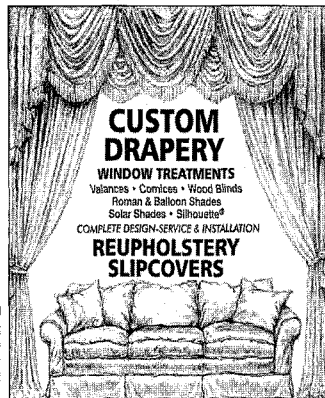
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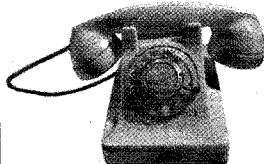
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Asian Lady Sought—For soul mate - by tall, classy, handsome, nonpretentious, quality, 60-year-old, white, Long Island, upscale man desiring to meet a tall, bright, slim, beautiful woman to share life's joy. Please send note and photo. 1993 ☒

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Crew Wanted—Divorced, Jewish male, 55, secure MD, sailor wishes younger, attractive Jewish female as co-captain or first mate for sailing and other adventures. Photo please. 1986 ☎

Tall Jewish Art Director—Handsome and fit, 52, seeks sensitive, attractive lady soul mate, 45ish, for lasting relationship. Photo, please. 1988 ☎

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Serene, Slender Educator—5'4", brunette, 54, loves the arts, seeks a soul mate, 55-65, who is kind, sensual and well-educated man. Manhattan. 1918 ☎

Pretty Blond—31, 5'7", 125, seeks fit, white, successful gentleman under 48 for romance and happiness. 1933 ☎

Very Successful, Middle-Aged Attorney—Who is handicapped and walks with crutches, who is handsome and very caring, seeks attractive, full-figured, nonassertive, intelligent woman for close relationship. Photo and phone. 1945 ☎

Single Jewish Male—40, self-employed in Hunterdon County, NJ, grounded and passionate, with intellect, seeks single female, 24-36, with charm, intelligence, substance and spirit. 1979 ☎

Nice Package—Successful, single, white, divorced businessman seeks a special lady for a loving relationship. Someone who is pretty, honest and trim, preferably in her 40s. I am 5'10", 160 lbs. My friends tell me that I'm very attractive, sensual, stable, and of course available. I'm looking to share sunrises and sunsets. Smokers welcome. Current photo, please. 1998 ☎

At Once—Sophisticated, playful, enchanting. Trim, curvy, graceful and great-looking with dark smiling eyes. Divorced, professional, part-time documentary filmmaker. Adventurous both in mind and spirit. Expressive, spontaneous, passionate. Loves Berkshires, but drawn to offbeat track: Capetown, Brooklyn Academy of Music, wilderness rafting. Known for wry humor and great sense of fun. Well-educated, socially conscious. Loves sunlight, good wine, walking anywhere, Matisse, interesting ideas. Seeks confident, articulate, active, cultured, divorced/widowed man, 44-62, who smiles easily. goldmark98@aol.com 1999 ☎

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Male, 47—Sensitive, intelligent, emotionally in-touch, communicative, great sense of humor - seeks a woman with similar qualities. 1991 ☎

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Elegant, Cultural, Vivacious—Happy, attractive lady, 60s, physically fit. Looking for compatible gentleman to share my love of life. Love theater, music, good restaurants, walks, socializing and cozy evenings at home. Photo/note. 1994 ☎

Italian Sensitivity—A man of rare honesty and loyalty, 34, seeks a 25-34 significant half. Curious to know more? Note and photo, please. 1983 ☎

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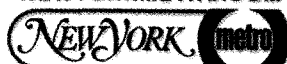
Handsome And Successful—48 years young, 6'3", athletic build, looking for soul mate, attractive and fit, up to 38, 5'6" plus. Photo/note. 1963 ☎

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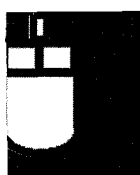
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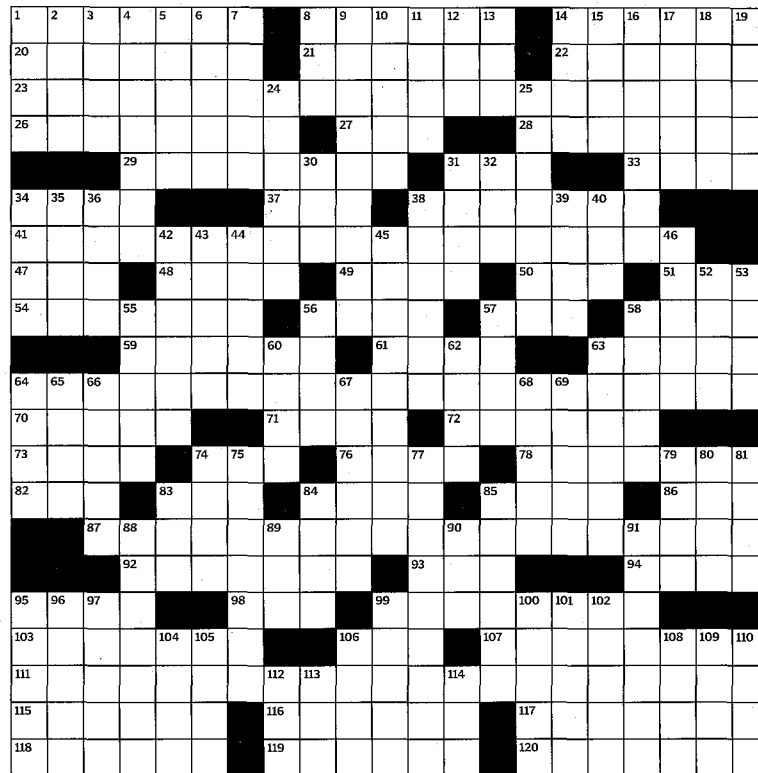
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ACROSS

- 1 Kind of well
- 8 Expects
- 14 Sampras rival
- 20 Front tooth
- 21 Six-line stanza
- 22 Tony winner Lane
- 23 Employment-news headline
- 26 Consist of
- 27 Locksmith's product
- 28 Before hostilities
- 29 Depreciated
- 31 Bar bill
- 33 Rick's love, in "Casablanca"
- 34 Diva's big moment
- 37 Novelist Kesey
- 38 Diatribes
- 41 World-news headline
- 47 Will Smith title role, 2001
- 48 Prod
- 49 Europe's most active volcano
- 50 Mongrel
- 51 Second of a game trio
- 54 Outcomes
- 56 Ages of distinction
- 57 Cry out loud
- 58 Mobile phone
- 59 German
- 61 Verne submarine captain
- 63 "A votre —!"
- 64 Housing-news headline
- 70 To the point, at law
- 71 Consort of Osiris
- 72 Pail's companion, sometimes
- 73 Shifter's concern
- 74 Pitch ———-hitter
- 76 Closet pest
- 78 Surviving spouse
- 82 Raggedy doll
- 83 Al Jolson's given name
- 84 Cowboy-boot appendage
- 85 Shopper's bonanza
- 86 Carte start
- 87 School-news headline
- 92 Rich
- 93 Opposite of 89-Down
- 94 Tommyrot
- 95 Examine by touching
- 98 Kennedy nickname
- 99 Starbucks order
- 103 Lands of the South Pacific, collectively

'Ripped From the Headlines'

'Cue' Crossword by Maura B. Jacobson



- 106 Matterhorn, e.g.
- 107 Riding the rails
- 111 Crime-news headline
- 115 "—— down!" (request for moderation)
- 116 Rather tardy
- 117 Listening attentively
- 118 Traffic tie-ups
- 119 Des ———, Iowa
- 120 Small plant source

DOWN

- 1 Neighbor of Minn.
- 2 Division word

- 3 Con game
- 4 Broadway blockbuster
- 5 Grenoble's river
- 6 "What the World Needs — Love"
- 7 Twelve dozen
- 8 Interrogate
- 9 Two-day vacationer
- 10 ——— as a beet
- 11 Bitsy's go-with
- 12 Slang for a sleuth
- 13 Alphabet sequence
- 14 Have ——— with (enjoy influence)

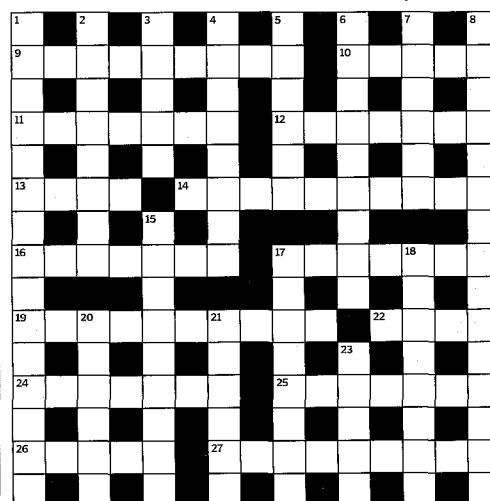
- 15 "Look Homeward, Angel" hero
- 16 Godless belief
- 17 Shoulder covering
- 18 Rooms in a casa
- 19 Prefix with red
- 24 Emitted a high odor
- 25 Hot sauce
- 30 Teachers' gp.
- 31 "—— Yellow Ribbon Round . . ."
- 32 Floating zoo
- 34 Controversial apple spray
- 35 Get one's goat
- 36 Sacred bird of Egypt

- 38 Verb forms
- 39 Paint crudely
- 40 Muff it
- 42 Shining
- 43 Still in bed
- 44 Hurriedness
- 45 Invites notice
- 46 Shorthand pro
- 52 Lowest female voice
- 53 Treble or bass sign
- 55 Say
- 56 Biblical oldster
- 57 Last year's frosh
- 58 Sophia's choice
- 60 Baltimore's railroad partner
- 62 Command to a sled dog
- 63 Where to spend a krona
- 64 Sitar music
- 65 Chez Eve
- 66 Imbibed
- 67 Favored one leg
- 68 "Not a chance!"
- 69 Satan's works
- 74 Org.
- 75 Identification item
- 77 Change the key, in music
- 79 Texas city on the Brazos
- 80 Big bucks
- 81 Allergy symptom
- 83 Slight commotion
- 84 Timetable, informally
- 85 "Sophie's Choice" author
- 88 Piercer of a sort
- 89 What all in favor say
- 90 Fall guy
- 91 Canceled, at Canaveral
- 95 Fence supports
- 96 Have an effect upon
- 97 Hotlière Helmsley
- 99 Puckish
- 100 "—— a Man," 1953 play
- 101 Valuable fur
- 102 Mode
- 104 One of the Youngs
- 105 Bank acct. earnings
- 106 Spumante city
- 108 Russian inland sea
- 109 "Able was —— I saw Elba"
- 110 Hatching place
- 112 Street of a film "Nightmare"
- 113 Chinese-type jacket
- 114 Sounds of hesitation

ACROSS

- 9 After work, quiet or music is timely. (9)
- 10 Revolutionary firm about belief. (5)
- 11 Close shaves? (7)
- 12 Select a quiet spot. (7)
- 13 Woman of vision. (4)
- 14 Arbitrary domination leads to warning. (10)
- 16 Vain advice to the prodigal. (7)
- 17 Absolutely nothing on the radio—due to power cut? (4,3)
- 19 Barred from society. (10)
- 22 The optimism that created Ruritania. (4)
- 24 The last place a Buddhist wants to go. (7)
- 25 Girl to turn to later. (7)
- 26 Calms and sends to sleep. (5)
- 27 Offensive lout hangs around. (9)

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Rufus



DOWN

- 1 Steps taken to make politically correct point. (15)
- 2 Value a quiet expression of approval. (8)
- 3 Material for Suzette? (5)
- 4 Drops from reserve teams. (8)
- 5 Gale blows itself out to a smooth finish. (6)
- 6 Reluctant to give credit. (9)
- 7 Twins in orange miniskirts. (6)
- 8 Being dirt-cheap? Hardly! (7,3,5)
- 15 Missed tea, perhaps, will take coffee. (9)
- 17 Second employer. (8)
- 18 Lack a little time. (8)
- 20 Promise not freely given. (6)
- 21 A speaker who is skilled at splitting alternatives. (6)
- 23 Right to go in a light dress. (5)

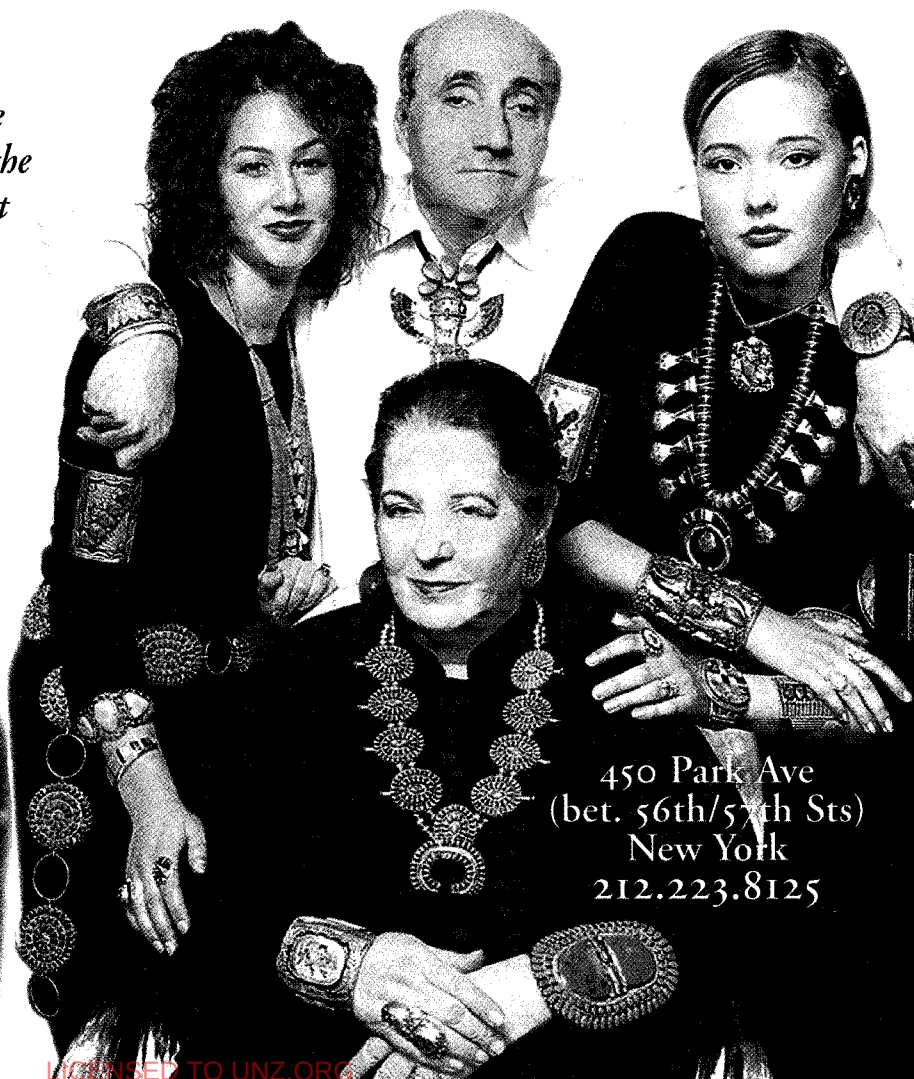


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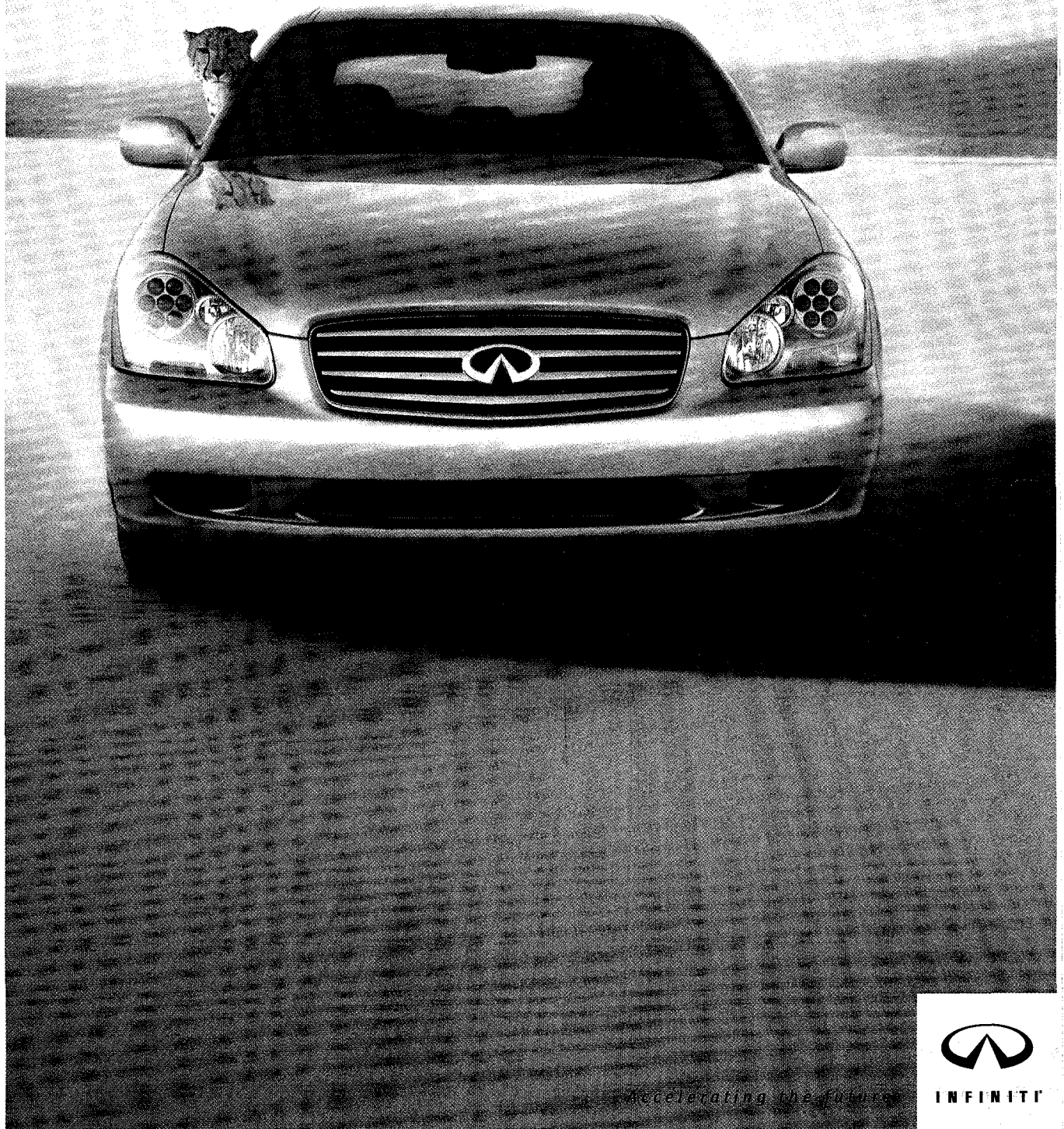
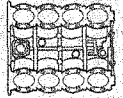
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